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TWELVE MONTHS

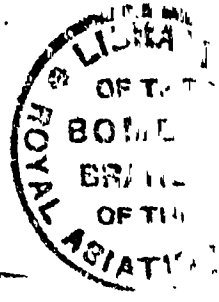
WITH

THE BASHI-BAZOUKS.

32966

By EDWARD MONEY,

LIEUT.-COLONEL IMPERIAL OTTOMAN ARMY, AND LATE CAPTAIN BASHI-BAZOUKS.



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TWELVE MONTHS

WITH

THE BASHI-BAZOUKS.

CHAPTER I.

JOURNEY TO TURKEY.

I DON'T like a preface to a book. In the first place, if a work of fiction, the fact of impressing on the reader's mind that what follows never did occur, and is merely the result of the author's fertile brain; is, to say the least of it, not the best way to create an interest. Secondly, if, as in this case, it is not fiction but facts to be related, let them speak for themselves, and the book stand or fall by its own merits: no preface ever made a bad work popular; a good one never failed for the want of it. As therefore I feel sure no object will be answered by writing one, I shall not attempt it.

In the month of July 1855, I left England with two of my brothers, to go and see the fall of Sebastopol, which we felt quite sure must occur shortly, and would

perhaps kindly await our arrival to do so. I was in that frame of mind when any change of scene, excitement, or even privation is acceptable—a state brought on either by the *ennui* and satiety a life devoted to pleasure produces, or by great mental grief; the latter was my case, and I flew to the scenes of the war, hoping that, if I could not find employment, I should at least find distraction.

I met my brothers in Paris, *en route* for Marseilles, where we embarked in that splendid French screw steamer, "Le Jourdain," and made a quick passage to the Dardanelles.

The society on board was most agreeable; a pleasant mixture of English and French. An English lady was amongst the number, who was leaving the comforts of home to be near her son in the Crimea, where I afterwards met her and where she stopped a long time. The devotedness of the act struck me as very characteristic of English mothers. We touched at Messina and at the Pireus on our way; we landed at both places, and, of course, from the latter we visited Athens. I will spare the reader a description: I saw nothing that bears on the war, the customs of Turkey, or the Bashi-Bazouks; and as for information regarding the places themselves and their inhabitants, is it not all written, and with much more information than I could bring to bear on the subject, in "Murray's Handbook of Europe"?

On the evening of the day we entered the Straits of

the Dardanelles, I overheard a gentleman, Captain J——, a Queen's messenger, with whom I had become well acquainted on the passage, asking the commander of the steamer to stop at the Dardanelles, as he had despatches to deliver to General Beatson, commanding the Irregular Cavalry at that place. The Captain refused, as it was not one of the ports at which he regularly stopped. He told Captain J—— that he must either take his papers to Constantinople and send them back by post, or else land them at Galipoli and forward them from thence. It seems these despatches—whatever they were, for I never knew—were important, and Captain J—— was much grieved that a delay of two or three days must occur in their delivery, as he knew no one at Galipoli to whom to entrust them.

Though I had come out as an amateur, I was anxious to be something more; and having been in the East India Company's army a few years, I did not think it impossible that, with the want of men then felt in the East, I might get service. I had applied in England for employment in the Turkish Contingent, but was refused, because I had retired from the East India service. I could not see the force of the conclusion; for I was told that, had I retired with a pension, whether from ill-health or other cause, I should be eligible; that is to say, in other words, because I was not obliged by a failing constitution to leave India, and was as strong and well as if I had never seen those burning shores, *ergo*, I was not

thought competent for service, where, of all things, health and energy were required!

I bowed, however, to the decree, and, as I have said above, came out to see—and to act if I could. On hearing Captain J——'s lamentations about his despatches, I proposed to him to take them myself direct from Galipoli to General Beatson. I did this in the hope I should get a commission in the force; besides, I had heard so much, and such contradictory reports, of the said Bashi-Bazouks, that I was anxious to see them. Captain J—— jumped at the offer; and as he had known General Beatson slightly in Spain, he wrote him a note with the despatches, saying who I was, &c., &c.; and it was agreed between my two brothers and myself, that I should rejoin them two days later at Constantinople.

Daylight saw us all landed at Galipoli, the first Turkish shore I touched; and after we had imbibed some coffee and smoked some early pipes at one of the Turkish *restaurants*, I jumped into a boat for the Dardanelles, and as the "Jourdain" became small by degrees and beautifully less on the horizon of the Sea of Marmora, I, with a spanking breeze from the quarter E.N.E., whence it blows thirty out of every thirty-one days in these straits, ran back the course we had just come. My boatman and I could not converse; so, after staring at me for some time, he lighted his pipe, and, leaning luxuriously back in the stern sheets, attended to the helm and sail, which was easy

work enough, for every now and then he fell asleep. I knew nothing of this till I saw our bow pointed back to Galipoli, and turning round, behold, my helmsman was in the land of dreams! I pushed him with my foot, when he started and fell forward, forcing the green glass mouthpiece of his pipe down his throat. He recovered himself, coughing much; altered our course mechanically; filled his pipe, and smoked vehemently, as if to keep himself awake. Thinking all was right, I went and lay down in the shade of the sail and began to read. I was startled at hearing a most unmistakeable snore; I looked, and he was asleep again. I was annoyed, for once more we were going all wrong. To hold out any hope of increased reward or fear of punishment was impossible, my knowledge of Turkish being confined to the one solitary word "Yok," no, which striking me as strange, when compared to the similarity of the negatives of European languages, I had already learnt. I pushed him once more with my foot, exactly the same results followed; again the green glass disappeared down his throat, again a perfect paroxysm of coughing, again an alteration of the course, another replenishment of the pipe, and, a few minutes after, the same sleep again!

I lost patience; so I went aft, took his pipe out of his mouth (the insertion of it down his throat was the only way to awake him), rolled him forward, took the helm, refilled the bowl, wiped the green glass, and knowing I could not go wrong, with Europe on one

side and Asia on the other to guide me, I cared little for the sleepy Turk, but sat and smoked, staring at the big steamers passing, and enjoying the beautiful scenery which lay on each side. Gaily did we progress: the wind was fair; it was a beautiful day; my boatman's tobacco was first rate (there is no bad tobacco in Turkey), and I never enjoyed a sail more. About four hours of it brought us in view of the small town of the Dardanelles and the high ground near it, which was covered with tents, and where numerous horsemen could be seen moving about.

The most remarkable objects, as we approached, were the windmills; there were no less than twenty-eight of them—not scattered about on the hills as proper-behaved windmills are, but in one long line, with their 168 arms, for each had six fans waving in a manner that really made one feel when near much more uncomfortable than a stranger felt in the machinery department of the Great Exhibition. I was watching these windmills, without knowing it was the Dardanelles, for we had passed it in the night, when my somniferous friend woke up, raised himself, looked around, expressed no astonishment at seeing where we were, in both a geographical and local sense, I mean near the Dardanelles instead of Galipoli, and he in the middle of the boat instead of the stern, but quietly came aft, took the helm, as if he had never left it, and ejaculating the one word "Dardanelles," soon ran ashore close to the consul's house there.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST PEEP AT BASHI-BAZOUK LIFE.

Now, when the evening before, Captain J—— had agreed to give me the despatches for General Beatson, we had not the slightest idea how I was to get from Galipoli to the Dardanelles; we supposed, however, that I could get horses and ride the distance, and under that belief I had put on a riding-dress; it was rather a peculiar one—it consisted of nothing but leather—and brown leather, too—breeches, waistcoat, and coat were all the same material and colour. I had chosen it in London, as I knew from experience its efficacy for hard work; still it looked peculiar, and expecting to encounter the uniform of the Irregular Cavalry officers, I felt a little ashamed, when landing, at my own personal appearance. I was directed to General Beatson's house; I had to pass through the horrid windmills to get there. It was a low, rambling, two-storied building, on the side of the water; the palings near the door, and the hooks in the walls of the out-houses, had each and every one a horse attached to it; there were no less than fifteen or twenty of them standing about, with every sort of caparison and mounting—

the horses themselves also differed as much as their accoutrements, for Arab, English, Persian, and Turkish were there, while the groups standing around inside the door and filling the hall and offices, were of every shade of colour, as indeed they were of almost all nations. Each one wore uniform, or what was intended for it, but no similarity existed between the dress of any two, with the one exception that all had large boots coming above the knee, and beards of apparently the greatest length to which they could be cultivated. In spite of this medley, it was, of course, easy to distinguish the English officers, though they were by no means all dressed alike. I liked the free and easy appearance of the whole thing—it appeared to me at first sight a service in which there was much to gain, and I hoped my interview with the Chief might be successful. As I entered the door, I was saluted with "Salaam, Sahib" (Hindostanee for, My respects, sir), by a man who, I saw at a glance, must have come from the sunny shores of Ind; this was a great relief in this Babel of tongues, as I also saw there were many of the same nation. I answered him in Hindostanee, and told him I wished to see General Beatson. Away he went, and returned presently with a person who, I found out afterwards, was the chief or head of the Interpreters in the force. He was a fine-looking man, with a very sun-burnt face, and had the appearance of being what he was—a Levantine. He accosted me in very good English, and begged to know whom he had

the pleasure of addressing. I gave him my name, and requested an interview with General Beatson. He went into an adjoining room and made known my request to another officer, who, looking at me and my brown leather suit rather disdainfully as he passed, went up stairs to the *sanctum* of the head of these wild tribes. I waited below. Whether it was my peculiar dress, or the large packet of papers I held, which caused the interest I know not, but I was soon surrounded by irregular beings of all kind—some spoke Hindostanee, some Turkish, others Albanian, many Arabic, a few Affghanistan or Awanie, besides a few other languages. All were unknown tongues to me, except the Hindostanee; in this tongue I was asked where I had come from, who I was, what I wanted, and, in short, everything that the individual curiosity of each prompted. More than half of these wild animals, together with officers, veterinary surgeons, and interpreters, were smoking, and smoking everything—the Turkish chibouque, the Indian hubble-bubble, the short clay pipe, the long German meerschaum, the mild Havannah, the Levantine cigarette, all were there; and the fumes of every species of tobacco waved gracefully about the low hall and ascended in spiral columns up the stairs, to convince the Chief sitting above, that his faithful followers were all present, and ready to act, below. It seemed, in truth, as if momentary action were expected; for every man, besides being booted and spurred, wore sword,

pistols, dagger, or knife, as the case might be; and had his steed awaiting him outside, while hot messengers arriving and departing (always at full gallop), showed, at all events, that something was enacting elsewhere.

Altogether I felt a little bewildered; it was a sort of scene I had never witnessed before, and one I did not quite or at all understand. I had been offered pipes (chibouques) by at least twenty of the dusky forms flitting about, and having taken one, I was consoling myself therewith, when another officer, dressed all in plain clothes, with the exception of very large boots, a very red cap all covered with gold, and a very gaudy scimitar, accosted me and begged me to walk up stairs, as the General would see me. Up I went; the arrangement of the house above was much the same as below—a kind of central hall surrounded by rooms; and seeing one was occupied, I presented myself at the open door. It was tenanted by two people: one, a soldierlike-looking man, with white beard and moustaches, dressed in some sort of light and easy costume, was seated at a table covered with papers and writing materials; the other, a stouter man, with a peculiarly quick and restless eye, reddish whiskers, and otherwise a clean-shaven face, attired *in toto* in plain clothes, sat opposite to him. They were eagerly conversing as I appeared, and the owner of the white beard looked angrily up as I darkened the doorway, and (evidently forgetting the permission he had accorded for the stranger to appear) asked me what I wanted.

"I suppose I am addressing General Beatson," I replied. He slightly bowed his head. "I have come, sir, from Galipoli," I continued, "with despatches from home, which arrived by the last Marseilles steamer;" and I held out to him the packet. He grasped them with eagerness, and tearing open the cover, having first hastily pointed to a chair, commenced reading. The despatches were long, and he read the different enclosures more than once, so that I had time to look about me. We were, I saw, in a bedroom, though whether used as such I knew not. It was evidently, however, the place where the General performed his toilet,—his jack-boots, with their large brass spurs, his richly braided coat, his superb sword, all were there and gave a martial air to the room, which the iron camp-bed and other camp contrivances scattered about did not lessen.

From regarding the room I turned to the inmates, and a greater contrast between the physical and mental (for I hold the mind is oft shown in the face) appearance of two people, 'twould be difficult to conceive. The General, evidently, from his stature as he sat, a rather tall man, had all the appearance of one who had seen much of life, not in its easiest shape, under a tropical climate, while a close observer might read in his countenance the temperament that delighted much in all the pomp and glory of war. His companion was rather short than tall, stout than thin, and had, as I said before, peculiarly quick and restless eyes, which seemed to take in much at each and every glance.

He was clearly a practical man. His face was Scotch, evidently a difficult person to take in, while in any bargain or treaty one who would be very careful not to expose the weak part; his high and massy forehead denoted intellect of no common order, which, on a more intimate acquaintance, proved to be that peculiar kind which, backed by strong common sense and a clear knowledge of men and things, was sure to push forward its owner in the world. I learnt afterwards that he, Mr. S——, was attached to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, our ambassador at Constantinople; but had held previous to that time consular employment in the Levant, where he had so distinguished himself that Lord Stratford had called him to the embassy, to avail himself of his talents. I do not think at that moment he held any official situation; but believe, or rather know, that he had been sent to the Dardanelles by Lord Stratford, to see how things went on there, and generally on all civil points to assist the Chief in the organisation of the wild tribes he had taken in hand. It was impossible to know him personally, as I did soon afterwards, and not to see how peculiarly fitted he was both by temper and ability to carry General Beatson in safety through the storm of troubles and difficulties which, even at that time, darkened the horizon; but unhappily our Chief regarded his advent from the first in a wrong light, and, instead of viewing him as his civil adviser and friend, saw only the agent of our ambassador, Lord Stratford, who, even at that early

time, he had persuaded himself without cause, was his enemy.

In reading the despatches the General had overlooked Captain J——'s note; so, when he had finished, he turned and asked me how I had got them. I referred him to the letter; he read it, and then said, "Well, I am extremely obliged to you, Mr. Money, for your kindness in bringing these papers, which, if delayed, would have inconvenienced me much. I see by Captain J——'s note, that you have been in India. How long were you there—in what Presidency, and in what regiment?"

"Ten years," I replied, "in the Bengal Presidency, and Twenty-Fifth Regiment."

"Were you with your regiment the whole time?"

"No, sir. The last six years I held staff appointments in the department of Public Works, though I returned to my regiment for a short time during the Punjab campaign of 1848-9."

"Ah, you want service with me?"

"I do, sir; and if you have anything to offer me, I shall be thankful for it."

"Yes, I think I can find something—these pen-and-ink people at home"—striking the papers he had just received—"send me no end of officers, but they are all paper men—not one in bodily shape have I seen yet—the force might go to the devil if I did not look out for myself. You can ride?"

"I can."

"Well?"

"If any one with the Duke of Beaufort's hunt questioned it, the sound invariably came from behind."

"You speak confidently."

"In seeking service in a cavalry force, I cannot afford to leave you in doubt on such a point."

"Very well. What rank did you hold in India, or rather do you hold, for I suppose you still belong to the service?"

"No, I left it eighteen months ago. I was very unfortunate in my promotion; and though between thirteen and fourteen years' standing, was but a lieutenant when I left it."

"Indeed. Well, I will recommend you for a captaincy in this force; and, let me see, will post you at once to the—the—the" (looking over a list on his table) "—th regiment. Eh, what do you say, S——? I think the —th regiment will do?"

"Certainly, General, you know best."

"Yes, *Captain* Money" (with an emphasis on the rank), you stand posted to the —th regiment as adjutant." He paused, and I felt very grateful to him; I tried to look so, as I said:—

"I thank you sincerely, General Beatson, for your kindness, which I shall endeavour to merit by my future conduct, whether——"

"Very good, very good," he replied, anxious to cut short my thanks. "Of course, you need not go away again?"

"I have nothing here, sir, but what I stand in."

"Well, never mind, that will do; your clothes" (and he smiled as he looked at them) "will stand wear, and a soldier wants little but what he has on; besides, I want officers and can't spare you. You can write to Constantinople for a sword and horse, you want nothing more; your uniform, we are not particular about that here, you can get by degrees. I'll give my quarter-master-general orders to have a tent pitched for you in the —th regiment, and the sooner you go up there the better. We've nothing more to say now. Good morning, Captain Money; tell Major W——, who is below, to come up here, please."

"Sharp work," said I to myself, when I had shut the door behind me. "I did not bargain for this; I've no bed, no clothes, not even Sir Charles Napier's regulated baggage-allowance for officers, of shirt, tooth-brush, and soap; and these confounded leather clothes (for I began to be out of temper with them) are cruelly hot,—it will be awful in a small tent;—but, *n'importe*, it won't do at starting to show a lack of zeal, and, as we are told 'man wants but little here below,' I'll try to believe the theory, and act on it."

I walked into the orderly-room below, found Major W——, sent him up, sat down on a large box, for no one noticed me, and waited.

There were two or three officers in the room, and they talked aloud; the subject of their conversation seemed to be the dreadful amount of work they severally had.

"I can't stand this sort of thing much longer," said

one with a peculiarly juvenile beard, "it's killing me; hang it, if there was active service, one wouldn't mind, but as it is, I've too much to do. Why, look at the orders to-day (taking up a manuscript book), it's too bad. At this moment I'm commandant of one regiment and a detachment of another, besides aide-de-camp to the Chief; and, as if that was not enough, last night they talked of my trying to be paymaster, just for a few days; no, no, it won't do; the pay accounts would be in a nice mess if I took them."

"Ah! well it won't last long," said another; "there are whole hosts of officers coming out from England; I saw a list of them. I often think how lucky I was to be one of the first who took service in the force."

"Yes, yes," responded the first, rubbing his hands, "there's no doubt we've got the best of the places."

Major W—— came down stairs, and stopped further parley. "Captain Money," he said, "the General has ordered me to have a tent pitched for you in the lines of the —th regiment. I've given the orders; you will find it ready whenever you go up."

This was the first intimation the others had, that I was now a member of the illustrious force of Bashi-Bazouks; they stared at me accordingly, not very civilly in more than one case, while here and there I detected a curl of the upper lip, that denoted something very like contempt.

"Leather clothes again," I thought; "never mind. I should like to wager my best charger (and he shall be

an expensive one), that I go into the first Russian square we charge, before that puppy near the door, who looks as if his upper lip and nose had joined partnership to express their disapproval of your humble servant."

In truth, however, there was a want of cordiality in their manners that struck me painfully. It appeared as if these fine gentlemen, being some of the first comers, and having secured very good posts in the force, looked with a kind of disdain on all smaller fry. This was not the only time I observed this feeling. I saw it often afterwards; it took months to wear it away. Another cause was also at work, which helped to produce the result.

In all organised military bodies, of what kind soever they may be, every man in it has his position, his acknowledged and known position, and no assumption on his part can elevate him beyond that place, while the absence of arrogance will not depress him either in the scale of rank or in the opinion of others. This was not the case here. It was an entirely new force, constituted without any established rules for its guidance, and every man admitted thereto thought that, as seniority and rank therein were neither conferred for age, time of service in other armies, or any known qualities, it was highly probable that if he took a high tone himself, others would measure him accordingly; besides which, at this early stage, the tenure of rank and position was so uncertain and undefined, that no one knew who was his senior, and, consequently,

assumed powers and positions which they were afterwards loth to relinquish.

Anyhow, the manners of the officers, taken *en masse* (for there were many exceptions), were in great contrast to what I have always met with and seen in the Queen's and Company's services. There the new-comer is kindly welcomed; every one is anxious to serve him, and do anything which shall help him to get over the little disagreements and difficulties which beset the *tyro* in the profession of arms. Here the reverse was decidedly the rule.

I shall not perhaps find a fitter place than this to explain how and by what rules rank and position were conferred in this corps—it certainly was the most anomalous thing that could be conceived—there was only one rule extant. It was, that every officer should be given one grade of rank higher than he held in the Queen or Company's service—thus a Lieutenant (as in my case) became a Captain—Captain, Major, and so on. This was all very well, but no rule existed as to men who had never been in any service, or else had served in foreign armies. The consequence was that A. who had never seen a shot fired, nay, who had never touched a sword, but had passed his life as clerk with the blunt end of a writing-desk screwed into the pit of his stomach for seven or eight hours a day, stood in a much better position when he applied for a commission in the force, than an officer of ten or fifteen years' standing—the former might be made anything the

Chief thought best; to the latter could only be given one step in rank.

There were, at this very time, in the force officers the commencement of whose experience in English military life dated from the day they joined, which in no case exceeded three months before I came. Some held very high positions, while under them stood officers of five, ten, fifteen, ay and eighteen years' standing—who had seen service in more than one quarter of the globe, and who could ill brook to see and be commanded by such commandants; for nice fellows as they might be, ay, and were in some cases, they were not exactly the style of men to place in such posts.

I will mention two cases to show how lavishly rank was given. In the Peninsular and Oriental Company's office, at either Alexandria or Cairo, I am not sure which, sat and worked before the war in some official capacity, and, for aught I know, with great talent and success, a gentleman whom, on arrival at the Dardanelles, I was introduced to as Lieut.-Colonel S——. In the intervals of his official duties, and preceding possibly two or three months his arrival in Turkey, he employed himself in doing "something military." I speak thus vaguely, because it was the way he used to speak himself—what it was I never could find out. I doubt if *he* knew; but it was connected, I believe, with the police on some railway, which was to be, or ought to be, constructed in Egypt. But the whole thing, even by his own account, was in such a cloud of mystery

that no one ever fathomed it. However, for these two or three months of "something military" he obtained from the Pacha of Egypt "something like rank;" here again, however, mystifying clouds stepped in, for its degree no one ever ascertained. I suppose, however, he found his military occupation, whatever it had been, more consonant to his feelings than the accounts of the P. and O. Company's steamers; so, leaving that employment, he presented himself at Constantinople about the month of June 1855. While in Egypt he had learnt Arabic, which he spoke well. Here, then, was a means to an end; he could apply for an interpretership on that score, and trust to the chapter of accidents for advancement.

Armed with a letter of introduction to Mr. S—— (the gentleman attached to Lord Stratford, whom I saw in the General's room), he called upon him at Constantinople, stated his qualifications, and asked if he could procure him anything to do in the Crimea.

This was scarcely possible, Arabic there being of about as much use as Hindostanee in the Shetland Islands, and so Mr. S—— told him; but he offered him a letter to General Beatson, who had several Arab regiments in course of formation, as his knowledge of Arabic might there be most useful.

Letter in hand, he presented himself before the Chief of these free lances, in much the same manner as I had done; but he had judiciously ascertained before leaving Constantinople, that General Beatson

was dreadfully in want of officers, and that a thorough knowledge of Arabic would be much prized. He was not, therefore, as may be supposed, inclined to depreciate his own value, and wisely judging that 'tis just as easy to get a good thing as an indifferent one, I presume he acted and spoke accordingly. When the interview with General Beatson took place, how long it lasted, or what passed thereat, I am as ignorant as the reader; but it showed my Egyptian hero was not a bad judge of cause and effect, for he left the audience-chamber (which he had entered as Mr. S——, of Peninsular and Oriental fame) as Major S——, in command of one of the Arab regiments of Bashi-Bazouks, with pay and emoluments equivalent at least to 1100*l.* per annum, and priority of position as well as rank to many officers in the Queen's regular army of fifteen or twenty years' standing. By some extraordinary mistake at the War Office, his rank on being gazetted was increased to Lieutenant-Colonel, which he held, together with the command of his regiment, till the close of the war and the disbandment of the Bashi-Bazouks. Never was promotion in this world more quick, never was the art *de se faire valoir* rewarded with greater success. He assumed his rank as a garment to which he was well accustomed; and it was not until his incapacity for military command became apparent, and his Egyptian antecedents became known, that he was supposed to be anything but a distinguished officer.

Lieutenant-Colonel S—— was not a bad specimen of

some officers in the force, who always tried to shield their ignorance of military matters by the excuse that, the service being an irregular one, it was absurd to conduct it according to the old cut-and-dried notions of military routine. This was certainly true, to some extent. Common sense pointed out, that the strict military law which cements and binds together the analogous component parts of a regular army, was not applicable to men of differing tribes, countries, and languages; still the very dissimilarity of the elements we had to deal with, and the wild nature of the men themselves, imperatively demanded the cohesive agency of broad but strict rules of discipline. Firmness to check, justice in punishment without fear of results, united with great consideration and kindness, even to that familiarity of intercourse which the Turk ever appreciates, were, I think, the principles to be observed in the management of this force.

Let me not be understood, however, in the foregoing remarks, to attach any blame to Lieutenant-Colonel S—— for the position which he held, or for his want of military knowledge. He had certainly been fortunate, but who refuses greatness when thrust upon him? rather let us admire the tact and worldly wisdom, that enabled him to seize upon an opportunity and 'take at the full the tide that led to fortune.'

I mention his case not with reference to himself, but as an illustration of a fact which, in my opinion, had much to do with the shortcomings of the force.

The other case I will mention shall be shorter, for I fear to tire the reader; besides, I have a whole twelve-month to write about, and my book must not exceed a readable limit.

In a force composed of many nations and languages as the Bashi-Bazouks, and officered by English, the interpreters' department was an all-important one. General Beatson saw this, and did his best, at this early stage, to call together good men for that work. From Smyrna came a Mr. G—— (an able linguist, for he spoke no less than nine languages well) and applied to the General for service in the force. He was a man of education, and a perfect gentleman in his manner. He was made head of the interpreters, and attached to the Chief's person—this was well; he was also made Lieutenant-Colonel, this surely was a mistake. When I arrived he was known as Colonel G——; he was the first person I spoke to on arrival at the General's house. His rank (though I cannot think it was well to make rank so cheap) did no harm to any one, he did his work none the worse for being called Colonel, and I never saw a man give himself fewer airs and pretensions than he did; he was always willing to do anything for anybody, and thus when later in the day he lost all military title and returned to plain Mr. (I believe by a decision at the War Office, advised by the then Commandant of the force), every one pitied him.

CHAPTER III.

THE CAMP AND CAMP LIFE.

I HAVE made a long digression. When I commenced it, I was sitting on a chest in the orderly-room, the other officers present having just heard that I was appointed to the force.

I thanked Major W——, who offered me a horse to ride up to the camp and an orderly to show me the way; our route lay first through the windmills I have spoken of; it looked dangerous to pass them on foot, it appeared insanity on horseback; the fans of the two between which our road lay, and they were more separated than any of the others, revolved, leaving a clear space of not more than six feet; if the horse shied at all or became frightened, the danger would be considerable. My guide, a tall Arab, mounted on a splendid horse, which by its lean head, large full eye, deep jowl, and small quivering ears, showed its claim to be a true son of the desert, did not look twice, but rode through quite unconcernedly, smoking his pipe as he did so; he never even turned round to see if I followed. I did not like, at this my first essay, to be outdone by him, and I advanced, endeavouring to calculate

An Arab Soldier of the Bashi Bazouks.

with mathematical precision the exact middle line; the horse I bestrode, to my astonishment, took no more notice of the horrid fans than my guide or his steed had done, and we passed safely. I rode through them hundreds of times afterwards on many horses, and saw all the world there do the same; so true is it that habit is everything to both men and beasts, for I am sure, if you took a hundred horses out of an English hunting-field, you could not force ten of them within twenty, instead of three, feet of the revolving monsters.

As I wended my way campwards, I had time to note the peculiar costume of my guide, which consisted of a tightly fitting vest of a bright green colour, surmounted by a species of scarlet hussar pelisse, with the sleeves flowing behind; both these garments were richly embroidered with gold, as were also his large loose green trousers stuffed into a pair of yellow boots decorated in front with tassels; covering his head was a gaudily striped silk handkerchief, not twisted as a turban, but tied in a knot at the back of his neck, and hanging like a curtain down his back. Round his waist, or rather stomach, he had a handsome shawl, of apparently Indian manufacture, in which were thrust two clumsy, silver-mounted, flint pistols, as also a "yataghan," or long knife; at his side dangled a semi-circular sabre; and over his shoulders and hanging behind, he carried a murderous-looking carbine, about seven feet long. His horse was no less richly caparisoned; the head-piece was studded with steel bosses or

knobs, while from his throat depended a horse-hair plume, dyed scarlet, two or three feet long; the reins were brass chains; the saddle, which had a high peak before and behind, was covered with silver-embroidered cloth, from the bottom of which peeped out his dish-shaped stirrups, the sharp edges of which are used instead of spurs. I had forgotten to mention a long ten-foot spear, under the spiked head of which was attached a round tuft of black feathers. When he had smoked his pipe, he stuck it into his boot, and thus accoutred he was certainly the most perfect combination of the magnificent, the warlike, and the eccentric that I have ever seen.

We met many horsemen on the way up: they all appeared to me to be restless kind of beings; one of my two brothers whom I parted with at Galipoli, came to see me at the Dardanelles some time afterwards, and he describes (as below) the impression they produced on him, in a little book they jointly published, "Our Tent in the Crimea." I quote what he says, as I, having been so long with the Bashis, could not possibly paint the first impression they produced on a stranger as vividly as he has done:—

"But the dress of the Bashi-Bazouks, however eccentric, was not that which gave me the idea of their insanity; it was rather their action in the open field, or on the highway. At a moment, without the slightest warning, the armed warrior (each carried two most ungainly but highly decorated pistols, and either a lance

or yataghan in addition,) raised his right arm above his head, put spurs to his horse, and proceeded at the utmost speed he could attain, as if against an enemy. He shouted, he screamed, he threw his right arm about, and if (as was often the case) he had his chibouque in it, he made dashes, now under his horse's neck, now over his ears, now in full air, now towards the ground, wheeling and turning his horse in the smallest pirouettes, and shrieking and bellowing with all his might.

"On a narrow public road, to see three or four of these beings bearing down upon you with the speed of the wind, is enough to startle you. You cannot tell that they are going to wheel their horses ere they come up to you; and the speed, the action, the entire thing, is apparent insanity. I stayed amongst them three or four days, yet could never overcome my surprise at seeing a horseman launch himself forward without any visible cause, and, after getting his horse into full stride in about ten yards, dash at the placid air with all the violence and weight of himself and steed. Of course, this power of at once attaining full speed is exactly what is sought by the men themselves, and their remarkable skill in horsemanship is probably only to be attained by some such practices; but it does not the less strike a foreigner as symbolical of a wandering state of mind."

The camp of the regiment to which I had been attached, was at the top of the low rise east of the Dardanelles. The common Turkish bell-tent had

been given to the men; the native officers had a rather better kind. There was not much regularity in the way the camp was pitched; but an endeavour had been made to place the tents in longitudinal lines for the different squadrons or troops, while the horses were picketed in parallel rows between. No heel-ropes were used in the majority of cases, the Albanian horses not being addicted to kicking each other. I was disappointed with the size of the horses, averaging about thirteen hands high; in fact, the mass were little more than ponies, none larger than cobs. They all had their saddles on, and yet they appeared to lie down with comfort. There was an immense quantity of horse-dung about the camp, no attempt apparently having been made to remove it; and, as I afterwards found, the dried portion was spread out under the horses as a bed at night. Flies by myriads, attracted by the unavoidable filth of a standing camp and the eatables scattered around and inside the tents, buzzed about and annoyed the poor horses not a little.

The dress of these Albanians, I found, was quite different from the Arabs; no two had exactly similar costume, but the general character was as follows:—A waistcoat made of coloured chintz; a jacket of thick felt, ornamented with devices of black cloth or gold, the sleeves loose as in the case of the Arabs, with inner white linen ones within; a fez cap; an immense brown leather appendage fastened round their waists, with receptacles for pistols, dagger, and knife;

a white linen petticoat of enormous size, hanging in numberless plaits from the waist to the knee; plain brown or black leather boots, with the tops turned down, the said tops being covered with coloured cloth ornamented to the taste of the wearer; in the majority of cases they had no arms beyond those mentioned, and it is almost needless to say that the pistols were flint, huge and clumsy.*

Their horses were caparisoned less magnificently than the Arabs, but much after the same fashion. A metal crescent generally depended from the throat-lash instead of a plume, and the reins were coloured ribbon, leather thongs, rope, or even string, according to the fortunes of the owner. Some of the men were very handsome; their skin is not dark, or even dusky, but an olive tint pervades its surface, and they have the power, or weakness (which you will), of blushing much more than the inhabitants of western Europe. My guide, the Arab, spoke to no one; he seemed to be a being of a different order to those around; but winding through the labyrinth of tents and horses, soon arrived at the pavilion of the Commandant. This done, he evidently had accomplished all he was told to do, and muttering something I, of course, could not understand, he wheeled round, and, giving a kind of Indian war-whoop and brandishing his long spear, he

* My description of both the Arab and Albanian dress differs slightly from the illustrations, but the photographs from which these were done were taken later, and the dress had been altered to insure uniformity.

struck his flat stirrups into his horse's flank, and was soon careering o'er the plain at full gallop. I saw no one to whom I could speak, and the door of the tent was shut; but presently a nondescript kind of Greek servant came forward, and asked me, in bad French, what I wanted? I had a note for Colonel M——, given to me by Major W——, and I bid him deliver it. He disappeared inside, came out, took my horse, and asked me to walk in. Colonel M——, a handsome man of seven or eight and twenty, received and welcomed me very cordially; he had just risen from his bed, on which he had been lying and smoking a splendid Turkish chibouque. I sat down on the solitary chair his tent boasted, while he resumed his recumbent posture. We talked together for a long time, over choice pipes and various cups of coffee with which we were served. He told me much of the force, its organisation, its prospects, &c. It appeared that he was the only English officer with the regiment, which was divided into six squadrons or troops, with a Yuzbashee, or captain, at the head of each; above them again was a Colassee (equivalent to a second in command), while at the head of all was a Binbashee. He told me that the intention was to have three English officers to each regiment, viz., Commandant, Second in Command, and Adjutant; these were to be quite distinct from the native officers, the full complement of which was to be kept up all the same. In short, I learnt that a regiment, when complete, would be as follows:—

ENGLISH OFFICERS.

Commandant—Second in Command—Adjutant.

NATIVE OFFICERS.

Binbashee, or head of a thousand; from the Turkish words *bin*, a thousand, and *bash*, head.
Colassee, or second in command.

IN EACH TROOP THERE WERE

1 Yuzbashee, or head of a hundred; from *yuz*, hundred.
2 Mulazims, or Lieutenants.
2 Bullock Emins, or Writers and Accountants.
4 Chouses, or Serjeants; *i. e.*, one to each subdivision, or "takim."
5 Ombashees, or heads of ten; from *on*, ten; much the same rank as our Corporals.
1 Nalbund, or Farrier.
1 Sarach, or Saddler.
100 Nefers, or Troopers.

The rate of pay, including all allowances, was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Commandant, per day	2	7	6
Second in Command, per day	1	19	0
Adjutant, per day	1	7	6
Binbashee, per month, about	14	0	0
Colassee „ „	10	0	0
Yuzbashee „ „	6	10	0
Mulazim „ „	5	0	0
Bullock Emin „ „	3	10	0
Ombashee „ „	2	5	0
Nalbund „ „	2	5	0
Sarach „ „	2	5	0
Nefer „ „	1	13	4

The native officers and men were all paid with English coin. I have put their rate of pay in English money, as it is simplest. It will be seen that they were all paid at a most liberal rate.

Besides the above, the English officers had rations

of meat and bread daily for themselves and servants; the native officers and men rations of bread alone.

Forage for horses was given as follows:—

Commandant,	.	4 chargers and	2 baggage ponies.
Second in Command,		3 chargers and	1 baggage pony.
Adjutant	. .	3 „	1 „ „
Bimbashee	. .	3 „	1 „ „
Colassee	. .	2 „	
Yuzbashee	. .	2 „	

And for all the remainder, forage for one horse.

I may have made some very trifling mistakes in the above statistics, as I quote altogether from memory, but I can answer for their general correctness.

Each regiment, and eight were to constitute the force, was to be 600 strong, thus giving a total of 4800 men, or, with native officers, in round numbers, 5000.

Of this large force, but a small portion, 1500 or thereabouts, were present at that time; these formed the nucleus of four regiments.

The English officers at the Dardanelles, including all attached to General Beatson's staff, were, perhaps, fifteen in number; many others were recruiting; many more were expected from England (we eventually had nearly one hundred), as also a whole host of surgeons, veterinary surgeons, farriers, and trumpeters, when the War Office would send them out. In fact, the whole force was quite in an embryo state.

While I was talking to Colonel M——, the Order-Book came in. All English and native officers were

directed to be at the large durbar-tent at the head-quarter camp, at five P.M., in full dress, to meet the General commanding the force.

"I can't go," I said. "I've got nothing to put on. I stand in the whole of my wardrobe."

"Oh, never mind," replied Colonel M——, "yours will not be the only strange dress there, and you'll see no two dressed alike."

"But really do you think I can go as I am?"

"I don't think anything about it. I'm sure of it, and sure also that if you are not there, the General will be annoyed."

It was decided that I should go. I began to feel the heat dreadfully; it was a blazing hot day, and the sun shone nearly through the thin Turkish tent.

"Why do you keep those big boots on?" said Colonel M——; "take them off and lie down there" (pointing to a half sofa, half bed), "and have another pipe; you must learn to smoke in the Bashis."

"Alas! it's an accomplishment I've possessed some years; but tell me, is there nothing to do?"

"How do you mean?"

"No regimental business?"

"Well, none that I know of."

"Who does your writing work in the regiment?"

"No one. I won't have any. It's an Irregular force, and no red tapeism is wanted."

"But still there must be *some* writing—muster rolls, pay abstracts, and things of that sort."

"Oh yes, there is, but it's easily done. You're not smoking."

"Thank you, I've smoked enough. What do you do with yourself all day?"

"Eat a little, drink a little, smoke a little, and sleep a great deal."

"Ah, and what do the men do with themselves?"

"Much the same."

"But you give them something else to occupy them; you have parade sometimes?"

"Yes, two or three times a week; it won't do to work them too much."

"Why?"

"They'd kick if you did."

"What—the men or the horses?"

"Both, I expect; they are not accustomed to it."

I took off my boots and lay down; hundreds of flies made the heat worse, or rather made us feel it more. Colonel M—— covered his face with a bit of gauze, and settled himself to sleep. I tried the same thing, but couldn't make it answer. First the flies walked about on my hands, I thrust them in my breeches pocket; they were too hot there, so I put on gloves; presently one or two got up the sleeve of my coat and tickled me dreadfully. I roused myself and tied my sleeves with a bit of string close round my wrists, and then thought I was safe. Not a bit of it; an adventurous fly got under the gauze and walked about on my nose, waking me up most successfully. Up again and

fastened the gauze round my throat. Then one got down my neck—I killed him by altering my position and lying on him; another followed—I tried the same thing, but not with the same success. I drove him from there, but he went down my back. I shut my eyes and tried to believe I didn't care about it; it would not do; another joined him, and they seemed to me to be dancing a polka up and down my spine. At last, finding it too warm I suppose, out they came, and I fell into a disturbed sleep. I had not slept many minutes when I was awoke by something much larger than a fly walking about on my legs. Up I jumped, nearly throttling myself with the gauze fastened round my throat as I did so, when "cluck, cluck, cluck" flew away a big cock who had come into the tent and mistaken my brown leather breeches for something to eat. This last adventure roused me thoroughly, and I did not try to sleep again. 'Tis always thus when you try to sleep in the day-time in tents, and no one who has not experienced it, can guess at the extreme lassitude such annoyances produce.

I lay watching the scene outside. The horses were nodding at their posts in the noon-tide heat; their owners, gathered into groups inside and around their tents, were talking, eating, smoking, or sleeping, as the case might be; many were cleaning their arms, *i. e.*, their pistols or long knives, and rubbing them with an assiduity that betokened the care bestowed on them. They appeared to me then (and my impression

was confirmed afterwards) very careless with their pistols. Everybody in camp was quite accustomed to the sound of firearms, at any hour or in any number, and paid no attention thereto. Those whom I watched, discharged many, really appearing to care very little what became of the ball. One very desirable feat appeared to be to discharge two pistols quickly one after the other,—the less interval of time that elapsed between, the greater the approbation of the bystanders: it was not allowed to fire them both at the same time, nor must the spare pistol be held in the left hand. These were the only rules which could not be infringed; as to any restrictions regarding the course of the ball, or any danger in any shape, it never seemed to enter their heads. This is how it was done: —The feat was performed either standing or sitting, apparently immaterial which. One pistol was placed all ready, at full-cock on the ground; the other, equally prepared, was taken in the right hand; the face of the actor became convulsed while he brandished his weapon as if in deadly strife with an enemy. He wheeled it about and held it in every conceivable direction; now, if it went off, it would have killed his dozing horse; now his Yuzbashee or captain would have bit the dust; now one of his admiring companions would have admired no longer; now the sleep of his Colonel would have been converted into the sleep of death; now the chance of these pages being written was in great jeopardy, *n'importe;* now his own life was in

danger, now somebody else's (he was quite impartial in his favours), till, no one expecting it at that moment, off went the pistol; the other was snatched up in wild haste, more or less raised, and fired as quick as it possibly could be (direction and elevation being quite secondary objects), and the face of the warrior resumed its usual placid expression. If the feat had been really well performed, *i. e.* if the interval between the firing off of the first and second pistol had been so little that the actor could not possibly tell if, at the moment of its discharge, it pointed to earth or sky, a buzz of admiration would reward his success, and one of his chiefs would perhaps offer him his own pipe, and look on him with paternal pride as he inhaled its fumes, while oft-repeated "Mashallas" from the crowd showed the esteem in which they held his prowess.

CHAPTER IV.

GRAND MEETING IN THE DURBAR-TENT.

At a little before five o'clock, the Colonel lending me one of his chargers, we proceeded to the durbar-tent specified in the orders; we passed the camps of two other regiments on the way, and fell in with another officer or two riding the same route, besides two or three dozen native chiefs—they were evidently gaily got-up for the occasion—some of them literally shone with gold braiding, while the unique snow-white petticoats of the Albanians contrasted well with the yellow colour of the precious metal scattered so profusely about, both on their own persons and on their horses. Of the beasts themselves I can only say that, while the horses of the Albanian regiments showed no breeding, and were, generally speaking, small to a fault, those of the Arabs were the reverse in every respect; and I could not help wondering how the men, poor as they must have been, could have picked up such splendid animals. I found out afterwards that the English Government had advanced them money for the purchase of all their horses; but of this hereafter.

On arrival at the durbar-tent, I looked around with surprise at the beauty of the scene;—it was situated nearly on the extreme verge of the high bank overlooking the Straits of the Dardanelles, the waters of which (at that particular period of the war, perhaps more than at any other) were invariably covered with the ships and steam-vessels of all nations, plying up and down on their mission to or from Constantinople and the Crimea. I was astonished at their number. The wind had changed since the morning, blew from the west, and dozens of sailing-craft, hitherto weather-bound at the mouth of the Dardanelles, were wending their way upwards,—their white sails, the beauty of some of their leviathan hulls, the steamers of all kinds, the small Greek craft dotting the waters every here and there; all this relieved and thrown out in strong contrast by the picturesque vine-clad hills and bold mountainous coast of Europe, so near that a round shot could easily reach it, gave these famous straits an air of beauty I have never seen equalled, rendered still more picturesque as the scene was by the glittering uniforms and superbly caparisoned horses scattered around.

It was a beautiful evening, and ere long the setting sun threw his mellowed rays on a richly attired advancing cavalcade, as it ascended from the lower road washed by the waters of the Hellespont. First and foremost rode General Beatson; his fine soldier-like form set off by the superb uniform he wore; most pro-

fusely ornamented, it appeared as if gold were the material, cloth the braiding. He dismounted, and walked up to the tent, his patent-leather jack-boots adding to his stature, while the general effect of his appearance was much heightened by a turban, constructed of some richly coloured fancy material, bound round his head in graceful folds, which again, in its sombre colours, was contrasted by a fillet of cord of gold covering its base and the upper portion of his forehead. When he presented himself before his wild chiefs, the murmur of applause and the respectful salutations with which he was greeted, showed how well and wisely he had calculated on the effect which would be produced on them by the magnificence of his attire, as also how their admiration would partake of affection when they observed that, European as much of his dress was, the Oriental character of the remainder, and the easy contour of the whole accorded well with their own dresses, and showed that he, their General and Chief, was anxious to demonstrate how completely in his interests, nay even in his habits and customs, he identified himself with them.

Certainly there never was a man who, in those respects, was better fitted to engage the affections of a wild and irregular soldiery; and as I closely watched the effect he produced, and thought of the judgment and tact that had caused it, I admired him as much as the natives, though from a different cause; and in my admiration and the excitement produced by

the whole scene, quite forgot the sorry appearance which my brown leather clothes presented in the midst of all this splendour. I learnt a lesson then with regard to dress and its effects, which I did not forget till I finally quitted the Bashis.

The tent in which the assemblage took place, was what in India is called a large, single-poled one; the "kurnauths," or canvas walls, were only fixed however on the side looking inland, so that it was open all round except there; it was thus a sort of pavilion, and could under its shade accommodate many, while those who stood without could equally well hear and see all that took place. It was one of the General's own private tents (he had three or four which he had brought with him from India), and pitched in the manner which I have described; it was most convenient for any assemblage or gathering where both accommodation and space were required. He had caused it on this occasion to be spread with Indian carpets, so that there was ample room for all to sit down; half a dozen chairs and a table completed its furniture.

When the General had acknowledged the presence of the English officers, saluted, and been saluted in return by the native chiefs (in Turkey the superior always salutes first), he walked into the tent, and, sitting down by the side of the table, invited the Binbashees, Colassees, and Yuzbashees to seat themselves in a semicircle on the carpet fronting him. This being done, and the English officers either seated or

standing (as it pleased them) near him, he called to his pipe-bearer, or *chibouque-jee*, to bring his pipe; it soon came, a very thick and splendid cherry stick, at least eight feet long, with a costly amber mouth-piece; and he then (having directed pipes to be handed round) smoked in silence. Most of the native officers were attended by their chibouque-jees, who, on the above order being given, quickly supplied their masters, and such as had not their own servants with them, were given pipes by the General's attendants, so that in about five minutes no less than forty or fifty chibouques were sending forth their odours, while large trays, with very small cups of coffee, *à la Turc*, *i. e.* without milk and with the grains of the berry in it, were handed round. For a short time a strict silence was preserved, broken only by the bubbling of the narguili, or water-pipe, used by some in preference to the chibouque, while each inhaled the fumes of his favourite narcotic. The silence was broken by the General, who desired that his interpreter might be sent. He came (the gentleman of whom I have spoken before as Colonel G——), when General Beatson thus spoke:—

"Tell the native officers that I am very glad to see them all here as my guests this evening, looking so well, so cheerful, and so happy."

This being translated into Turkish and Arabic, and a murmur of approbation and thanks having passed through the throng, the General thus continued:—

"Tell them also that I am delighted to see the

splendid horses many of them have, the magnificent retinues that accompany them, and, in short, the dazzling brilliancy of the whole assembly."

When interpreted, I saw many of them adjust some article of their dress, that they might look as well as possible before so all-observant a chief.

"Let them know," continued the General, "that I have requested their attendance this evening, on account of certain reports which have reached me. I have been told that rumours have been going the round of the camp, to the effect that it is my intention to alter entirely the character of this force, to make it a regular army, to put men and officers into strict uniform; in short, to carry on the service by cut-and-dried rules, and destroy that feeling of independence, of self-reliance, and of noble chivalry, which now exists among its members. Translate that first, and mind you do so word for word."

On their being made to understand it all, the General, in a loud voice, added:—

"Now, let them look at me! (Translate each sentence as I utter it.) Do *I* look like a man who would do all this? Is this the sort of dress (and he struck his chest with his hand) *that* sort of man would wear? Are these the kind of uniforms (and he glanced proudly round on both English and native officers) by which *that* sort of man would be surrounded? Do we *look* like a regular army? Do our very horses appear as if they had gone through the hum-drum

lessons of a riding-school? No, Colonel G——, tell them that this is an Irregular force, regarded as such by the Government of England, who expects much from it; that I, their Chief, have been accustomed to Irregular forces, and know what they are; that in me they have an officer in whom they may confide; and I hereby promise them, that as long as I am at their head, that as long as they follow me, whether as now over these quiet plains, or later against the serried columns of the Russians, Irregular they are, and Irregular they *shall be*. And now let those stand forward who have said the reverse. I'm d——d but I'll see whether their word or mine will be believed!"

He struck the table with his gauntleted hand as he concluded, and looked proudly round on his followers. The scene was a most remarkable one, and never shall I forget it. Beside him stood his daughter, a girl of about thirteen or fourteen years old. She was very pretty, and her beauty was probably increased by the Amazonian kind of dress she wore, surmounted as it was by a golden turban the very miniature of her father's. Her bright eyes sparkled with ardour as she listened to his discourse, and fancied herself, I dare say, by his side in the *melée* with the Russians he had alluded to. The native officers, excited at the speech made to them, and having given vent to their admiration, were eagerly addressing each other. The text of the discourse had been picked up by those nearest the tent, who had repeated it again to those behind

(for a great crowd of cavalry had now collected), and there was no mistaking the enthusiasm they evinced, or the love and gratitude he had called forth. Shouts rent the air, a wild feeling of excitement pervaded the whole assembly, the masses of horsemen waved to and fro, as if under the influence of an all-absorbing passion; pipes were laid aside; and as if actuated by one common impulse, the native officers all withdrew from the tent, mounted their horses, and waited to do honour to their Chief when he should come forth. This he soon did (his daughter mounting and riding by his side, as if born in the saddle), and having bestrode his splendid charger, led the way towards his home, accompanied to the crest of the high ground by the whole assembly, to the sound of tom-toms, the firing of pistols, the hallooing of the Albanians, the yelling of the Arabs, and the neighing of the horses, who seemed to partake of the general excitement.

CHAPTER V.

RECRUITMENT OF THE FORCE, AND ITS DEFECTS.

NEXT morning at breakfast I asked Colonel M—— to point out to me what he wished my duties in the regiment to consist of.

"In what way?" he replied.

"As regards the native officers and men."

"Well, it's difficult to define any *regular* duties; let them alone as much as possible, I find that much the best way."

"But they surely must be taught discipline, they are not soldiers at present."

"I don't think you can improve them; you must remember what they are, a wild, harum-scarum set of devils; discipline them, and they'll be good for nothing."

"I quite feel that any *pipe-clay* discipline would be unwise, but you surely do not advocate their remaining just as they are now?"

"Oh, the horses will improve with good feeding, the men will learn something on parade; it will all get better in time."

I could get nothing more out of him; after break-

fast he proposed we should go and smoke a pipe in the Binbashee's tent, and receive the morning report of the regiment from him, at the same time.

On entering we found some half-dozen of the native officers seated on carpets; the eternal chibouque was in front of each; they all rose, and the Binbashee coming forward offered his hand to the Colonel, who shook it, as also the hands of all the others. I did the same thing, for I saw they expected it; we then seated ourselves, and according to Turkish custom the Binbashee, or host, salaamed to each in turn in the Turkish style; we returned it; pipes and coffee for us were brought in (a repetition of the salaaming took place after the coffee, this is an invariable rule), and the business such as it was commenced. Colonel M—— could speak but a very few words of Turkish, so his interpreter (a Levantine, who spoke French well) had accompanied us, and I thus understood what passed.

According to the Binbashee's account, the regiment was in a most perfect state, he had literally nothing to tell; he dilated however on the expediency of filling up two vacancies of Chouse and Ombashee (sergeant and corporal) with such and such men; and Colonel M—— sending for them, they came, were approved of, and informed of their promotion. They looked pleased and grateful at the Binbashee, went up to him and kissed his hand, and then turning did the same to the Colonel; the Binbashee beckoned to the second man to kiss the Colonel's hand *first*, but he either did not

see or would not heed, and did as his companion had done. I saw the Colonel was annoyed at being thus made No. 2; but it would have taken trouble to rectify it, and so he let it alone. After a pause, he told them I was appointed to the regiment; none of them seemed interested in the news. One even asked what I was appointed for; they all seemed to think any more English officers superfluous!

We did not stay long; as we walked back, a loose horse from another regiment crossed our path; he had on his saddle and accoutrements, and yet, in spite of these, seemed highly to enjoy his freedom; he passed at a brisk trot, with elevated head and tail, down the lines of picketed steeds, that pawed at him as he went his way; no one followed him, no one tried to catch him, he pulled up opposite a horse that was alone, and seemed inclined to make friends with him; he advanced, slightly neighing, and put his head to his shoulder; the picketed nag gave vent to that short squeaking kind of neigh indulged in under such circumstances, and struck forward with his fore foot. The noise attracted the notice of his owner, in a tent hard by, who came out, but instead of trying to catch the runaway, he began pelting him with stones to induce him to forego his attentions to his charger, and at last drove him off. The same scene was repeated a little distance down the line, the errant horse's owner was not there, and it was no business of anybody else's to catch him. I have seen horses thus hunted about for

hours, and many public beasts were later lost by this bad habit.

I met and conversed with other officers during the day, and got information regarding the manner the recruiting had been carried on. I will state what I then and afterwards learnt, both from what was told me and from my own experience when I was later sent on detached command, to take charge of a body just recruited and to add to their number. General Beatson had, at the commencement, sent for that purpose English officers into Syria and different parts of Asia Minor, as well as into Bulgaria, Albania, Rumelia, and Macedonia in European Turkey. The terms on which the men enlisted were, that they should serve the English Government as long as required, at the rate of pay detailed in the third chapter, and with rations for themselves and horses; also, that on disbandment, each man should receive a free passage to his native country, and a gratuity of three months' pay.

It will be seen by the list I gave, that the pay was very liberal; for instance, a Nefer or Trooper got 200 piastres (about 1*l.* 13*s.*) a month and bread rations, besides forage for his horse. In the regular Turkish army the same man would receive about 18 piastres (two shillings), besides rations and clothes. The reader will not then be surprised to hear that our service (when the men were once assured that they would be regularly paid) became very popular. It took, however, a long time to convince them of this;

the pay of the Turkish army being always in arrears, and that to the ridiculous extent of ten, twelve, or eighteen months, they could not believe that a munificent sum like 200 piastres would be paid regularly. Besides, with their Oriental knowledge of universal peculation in the army of the Sultan, it was not easy to convince them that the greater part of the said 200 piastres would not, somehow or another, find its way into the pocket of the English Commandant.

Thus at first the recruiting went on slowly enough. The army is by no means popular in Turkey (who can wonder at it?), and as this was quite voluntary enlistment, the ranks filled very slowly. I heard afterwards Brigadier H——, who was, I consider, one of the best officers in the force, and *very* successful in the recruitment he conducted in Bulgaria, say, that when he commenced he could not get a man for days and days, and that when he *did* get one, he paid him daily, to show him there was no lack of cash, and exhibited him fat and sleek, with his well-fed horse, at the different villages he came to, as a kind of bait!

This state of things, however, did not last very long, and when once confidence was instilled, they literally poured in. A man of apparent respectability would come to the recruiting officer and say that, if he were made a Yuzbashee, he would bring seventy or eighty men, with steeds of the first water, to enlist at once. Time pressed; it was thought the force would be required to take the field directly, and his offer was often accepted.

Seventy or eighty individuals certainly came, mounted on seventy or eighty animals, but in many cases the individuals were boys, or old men, and the animals ponies of the first water for diminutive size and extreme age.*

These defects were remedied, more or less, according to the activity and energy of the recruiting officer; but still many miserable specimens of both biped and quadruped remained, that would have been dear to the English Government, if their cost had been confined to the bread they eat and the forage their horses devoured. Another disadvantage of taking men in bodies through the intervention of another, was that they learnt to regard the native officer who had enlisted them, as their proper chief, and could not understand that they owed fealty and obedience to any one else, much less to an accursed "Giaour."

I have said that, when enlisted, they were advanced a sum of money for the purchase of a horse. This advance they were supposed to repay by monthly instalments of 50 piastres. Thus, if the sum advanced was 1000 piastres (the usual amount), it would take twenty months to pay it off. This arrangement was eventually productive of great loss to the English Government; for first, in all cases of desertions (and they were numerous) the unpaid balance could never

* This remark regarding the horses did not apply to the Arab regiments, for they were universally capitally mounted.

be recovered; secondly, the recruiting accounts of one officer were lost, and then the debt of each man had to be put down at what he himself stated it was; thirdly, the recruiting officer in another case left the force unwell soon after he joined with his men, and his system of advances and mode of recording them being decidedly of a complicated nature, the commandant to whom the recruits were given over, declined investigating the accounts; and the consequence was, that the horse-debts of the whole regiment, amounting in round numbers to 2500*l.*, was lost to the English Government. I am really afraid to say how much *was* lost in the aggregate in the Bashi-Bazouk force by this system of "horse advances," but it must have been very considerable.

One of the most extraordinary and irregular things in this Irregular force, was the very system alluded to. *Whence* the order originated was always a mystery—it certainly did not appear in the agreement between the British Government and the Porte on the subject of recruitment for the Bashi-Bazouks. I believe the Minister-at-War and all his subordinates to be guiltless of having issued it. The Foreign Office, which had for a long time the entire direction of the force, certainly did not do so. The Commander-in-Chief had too much to do in the Crimea to even think of us; besides, we were not under his orders. I know of no other quarter whence it *could* have come, and I don't suppose either myself or anybody else will ever know

whence it *did*. 'Tis like a hundred other facts connected with the war—"great harm was done, but no one is to blame!" It must not be supposed that I think it was altogether unnecessary to advance money for the purchase of horses—far from it. The corps could not have been got together so quickly otherwise, but I think it should have been done in another way, and whoever authorised the expenditure should have seen to this. I will revert to the system of horse advances again presently, at present I wish to show another serious error committed in the recruitment.

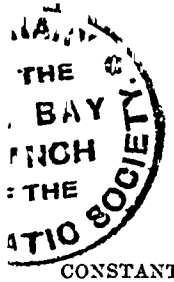
When the recruits were brought in large numbers by a man who had as a reward the promise of a Yuzbashee's or other officer's place, he, with that facility which all Orientals have for turning position and power into money, took care to enlist men who agreed to be enlisted on his own terms, *i.e.* to pay him a certain sum of money for the boon of risking life and limb in the service of the British Government, and for the chance of plunder, with which, in the idea of all such tribes, war is so intimately connected. Enormous sums were made by many men in this way, and the consequence was, that the recruits they brought were never contented; often deserted directly they had secured their horse, or rather the money which they had been supposed to pay for the animal; and, if they remained, were so completely in the power of the native officer, looking up to him alone for the chance of promotion or other advantage, that it was impos-

sible they could become good soldiers, or respect their English commandants.

Had there been more time, it would have been better to have engaged each man singly; and, to revert to the subject of horse advances, I think the recruiting officer should have bought every horse himself, as some did, and as I always did when later I also recruited in Western Turkey. The simple plan I adopted was, after enlisting a man, to send him to find a horse, which he brought to me with the owner, and if I approved of it (which I never did unless it was big enough, young enough, sound enough, and strong enough), I bought it for the recruit at a fair price, the amount paid being the horse advance he was debited with, and no more. This, surely, was preferable to the plan of giving a man 1000 piastres, and telling him to buy his own charger. He bought a rip and pocketed the difference; for, though only money lent, he thought it better to secure it at the time, even if he repaid it afterwards—which, as before explained, he often did not!

There is no doubt, however, that all the greatest errors committed in the recruitment of the Bashi-Bazouks were in consequence of the hurry in which the whole thing was done, and that for this General Beatson was not responsible. The force was to be raised, *coute qui coute*, within a given time; men must be had, horses must be found; the recruiting districts rang with the incessant call to enlist under the British

flag; the result of all this was, that we made serious mistakes, both from our ignorance of the country and the people, but, more than all, from our haste; and what would have been of more importance than even pecuniary loss had the war continued, we often got a bad article for our money.



CHAPTER VI.

CONSTANTINOPLE—BASHI-BAZOUK SCENES—MAHOMET THE AFFGHAN.

After I had been at the Dardanelles some few days, a meeting of the officers was held at the large durbar-tent; I forget at whose instigation. When we were all assembled, the second in command explained to us that certain reflections upon General Beatson's conduct had lately appeared in the papers. The officers, he said, did not share in the sentiments expressed in these articles, and he therefore proposed that we should all sign a letter which he produced, and which is the one in page 21 of General Beatson's pamphlet.* I had then been with the corps a very short time, and, perhaps rather weakly, signed in conjunction with the other officers, although at that time my experience of the force and its General was not sufficient to entitle me to an opinion either for or against.

I found Colonel M——, my commanding officer, had a most insupportable dislike to doing anything; he certainly was not an active man; he did not care to

* "War Department and the Bashi-Bazouks," by Major-General W. F. Beatson. Clowes and Son, Charing Cross.

be employed himself, and did not like to see any one else engaged. He had been in the army, though I do not think he was very long in it. At the early part of the war he was in the Turkish service, saw much fighting on the Danube, and had the reputation of being a gallant officer. I found it was very easy to get on well with him if I did nothing; very difficult otherwise. Now, it certainly is no great evil to serve under a commanding officer who cares not what you do so long as you let him and his regiment alone; but I did not like it. I had not joined the Bashi-Bazouks to draw my pay and look on; so after one or two attempts to make myself of use, and to be more than a mere cipher in the regiment, which attempts were always met by the colonel with an expostulation, and a long argument, to show me that I was giving myself labour for no purpose, I determined, when I could look about me, to apply to be removed into another corps, for I plainly saw that I could do nothing in that one.

The second day after my arrival, General Beatson asked me to dine with him. I met at his table about some six or eight other officers. He never sat down to dinner alone; for, besides his staff, there were always three or four guests; he certainly was a prince in hospitality. The dinner was very excellent. Mrs. Beatson, whom I then saw for the first time, had been with the General throughout, as also his two daughters, the one I have already mentioned and a still younger one. The elder had this evening doffed her golden turban, but looked quite as

pretty without it, and amused me much by her lively sallies and *naïveté* of language and manner.

The conversation at table turned on the war, and the chances of the force seeing service shortly. The General was very guarded in what he said on this point; but I do not think he expected the Bashi-Bazouks would be ready to take the field before the commencement of 1856. I spent a very agreeable evening. General Beatson certainly made a charming host, and it was time to retire (for he kept early hours), only too soon.

Next morning I awoke with a strong fever—having no clothes, not even a change of linen, I had been most uncomfortable during the three days I had been in camp, as also unpleasantly warm; for leather clothes, however good for hard work, are not calculated for a hot climate, and the weather was most sultry and oppressive. As I lay in the little bed, with a blazing morning sun shining through the tent, I became convinced that the longer I stayed the worse I should be, so I got up, and mounting my horse, with my pulse at 130°, I rode down to the town. A kind officer, the superintendent of the Land-Transport Corps, offered me a room in his house, and I sent the doctor who was attending me to report my state to the General, and ask him to give me leave to Constantinople for a few days. The leave was accorded; I got on board one of the Austrian Lloyd's steamers which touch at the Dardanelles, and after an eighteen or twenty hours' passage saw Constantinople. I can tell the same story that everybody else

tells who has visited this city:—how beautiful it is from the outside, how detestable within;—but at the time of which I write, I think the Golden Horn itself was the most remarkable feature of the whole. As we steamed up to our anchoring-post, I thought I had never seen such a forest of masts, and such an assemblage of flags of all nations. When we anchored I jumped on board a caïque (I had no luggage to trouble me), and was soon landed at Tophanah quay;—they are funny boats, those caïques, equally sharp at stem and stern; they are so narrow that you cannot stand up in one, as it would certainly upset, nay, you cannot sit in it, but must lie at the bottom of the boat, on a carpet which is always ready-spread there. From Tophanah, taking a guide who spoke some civilised language, I soon scrambled up to Misserie's Hotel (the largest and dearest in Pera), and there, to my joy, found both my brothers, as also a great friend of mine, who afterwards held a distinguished post on the medical staff of the army, and whose hearty welcome, in that crowd of strangers, did my heart good. They (my brothers) were making all preparation for the Crimea,—I regretted much that I could not go with them; but fate had made a Bashi-Bazouk of me, and I was no longer my own master.

Before leaving the Dardanelles, I had ascertained where I could get my uniform at Constantinople, and I at once set Mr. Lawrie, the tailor, and his myrmidons to work.

I have said that no two at the Dardanelles were

dressed alike: this was more owing to some having got uniforms of former services, varied according to their tastes, than to the fact of no regular or efficient dress being in existence. The uniform I got made, and which was what General Beatson had devised, was as follows:—A dark green cloth frock coat fastened with hooks up one side of the chest, and totally without collar of any kind, as also without ornament beyond a beading of gold lace to correspond with the small brass buttons running up one side of the chest—a pair of scarlet breeches, with a broad rich gold stripe running down the side of the leg—patent leather jack-boots with large brass spurs, and a cap, without peak, of scarlet cloth with gold band and braiding.* The dress, which may be seen in the illustration facing the title-page, was well enough; the coat especially was in good taste and very comfortable for hard work. I found, however, I could not stand the want of a peak to the cap, my eyes could not support a Turkish sun without it, and, as I had seen much licence in uniform was allowed, I had one put on. The uniform was soon finished, and, as I found all my luggage at Constantinople, I was once more in decent attire with the comfort of a clean shirt on my back. I found the naked neck at first very uncomfortable, (no collar or neckcloth was

* Later, other dresses were devised for the officers, and were more or less in vogue at Shumla; but I do not think any of them, either in comfort or appearance, were equal to that described and shown in the illustration. I and many other officers wore the dress detailed to the end.

allowed, and the coat was cut down very low,) while it certainly looked peculiar. For some weeks, till I got accustomed to it, I was continually getting stiff necks. After suffering some time from this, I, on my return to the Dardanelles, put on a collar and black neckcloth. General Beatson happened to see me when thus attired—"What's that bit of carpet youv'e got round your neck, Captain Money?" he said.

"It's a simple neckcloth, sir."

"Take it off, I beg; when the neck is covered, it quite destroys the character of the uniform. I'm not particular generally as to dress, but I'll allow nothing about the throat, which should be as naked as your hand."

I found out afterwards, this was his hobby, differing somewhat from Sir George Brown's, who killed his men by strangulation. I obeyed him of course, and of course got another stiff neck. I became accustomed to it, however, at last, and eventually thought with him that it looked well. From disliking I got to like it so much, that when later at Shumla under another Commandant neckcloths became the fashion, I always wore my throat bare!

The table d'hôte at Misserie's Hotel was a lively scene, every day fresh arrivals from the Crimea appeared; and some of these heroes with their well-worn uniform, telling of hard work in the trenches, contrasted not a little with the young officers from England, who on the advent of the Marseilles steamer, or some large transport from home, made their appearance for a day or two at the dinner-table.

From the moment I arrived at Constantinople, I had been looking about for one or two horses. I found they were dreadfully dear; but a horse I must have, so I bought a decent cob for 40*l.*, determined, if after a little time I could get nothing better at the Dardanelles, to send to England for a couple. Pistols, and very good ones, I had with me, but I bought a sword of the pattern laid down, viz., a plain cavalry one with steel scabbard, and thus behold me perfectly accoutred.

The reader will, I am sure, excuse me if I omit any description of the city of the Sultan; there have been so many accounts of it the last two years, that I could not hope to do more than repeat what others have seen and written.

I did not stay more than five days there, as I had but one week's leave; so bidding adieu to my brothers, whom, being both non-military men, I cautioned, sagaciously, not to expose themselves too much before Sebastopol, I with my horse, my sword, and my uniform, returned to the Dardanelles on board one of the many steamers then running.

On reaching the camp I found a few officers had arrived from England during my absence; and as I saw nothing to induce me to relinquish my intention of exchanging into another regiment, I thought I had better do it quickly, as later, the vacant places being all filled up, it might be more difficult.

After wandering about the camp a whole day, conversing with the officers in each of the three other regiments, and peeping, as far as I could, into their

internal economy, I decided on asking to be removed into the Arab regiment commanded by Lieut.-Col. S——, of whom I have before spoke. I came to this conclusion firstly, because I saw that he would be glad enough to have an officer who like me was willing to work; and secondly, because I found there were eighty or a hundred men in his regiment who spoke Hindostanee, which of course would be a great assistance to me, as I could explain myself to others speaking only Arabic through the medium of one of these men.

Once decided, I sought and obtained an interview with General Beatson, pointed out to him that my knowledge of Hindostanee indicated the —— regiment of Arabs, where it was much spoken, as my proper sphere of action, and left him with a promise that my wish should be attended to.

Next morning, Colonel M—— had a parade; he told me the previous evening that we were to be out at seven o'clock. An English trumpeter had been posted to his regiment since I joined, and he was directed by Colonel M—— to sound the *reveillée* at six, and the "boot and saddle" at half-past, so that by seven all might be ready. At ten minutes before the latter time I emerged from my tent ready-booted and spurred, while my charger, already saddled, awaited me. What was my astonishment to see all the horses picketed in their usual lines, except a few who were being led off in a long string to water. I thought that the parade must have been put off by order of the Colonel, and went to

his tent to ascertain if my surmise was correct: he like myself had just finished dressing, and was buckling on his sword as I entered.

"Have you put off the parade?" I said.

"No, why?"

"Not a man in the regiment has begun to get ready yet, and some are taking their horses down to water."

"Oh, they won't be long; I'll send to the Binbashee to hasten them: you see there's a great difficulty about Turkish and English time; it's seven now by us, while it's one o'clock by them."

"Very true, but they were told to get ready when the trumpet sounded; it's an hour now since the *reveillée* was blown, and yet nothing is done."

"My dear fellow, you *cannot* hurry them; here, sit down and have a cup of coffee; what does it signify whether we parade at seven or half-past?"

While drinking coffee, the Binbashee and interpreter came in; the Colonel told the former, the men were late, that parade was ordered half an hour after the second trumpet, and the time had long since passed.

After the Binbashee had drunk coffee and smoked a pipe (for he did not seem inclined to hurry himself), he went out to hasten the regiment. He sent off a messenger to the Yuzbashee of each troop, and about ten minutes later I began to see the first preparations for parade take place. The men began lazily to bridle their horses; some of them mounted and took short gallops; toms-toms (small drums) began to beat, and in about another half-hour more than half the regiment

was drawn up in squadrons. All this time the Colonel had patiently walked up and down, and when, at a quarter past eight, he was told the regiment was ready, he mounted his horse and rode out. I followed him, and *en route* asked the interpreter why nearly half the regiment had not turned out.

"C'est le Binbashée qui règle tout ça," he replied, looking astonished at my asking him the question.

I asked the Binbashee, through the interpreter, the same thing.

"The causes are various, I am responsible!" was the answer.

The parade began: it was rather difficult to see the squadrons for tobacco-smoke, as every other man was smoking a short chibouque; but when a portion of the matinal pipes were concluded, the scene became a little clearer.

They were a strange medley; it was the first time I had seen an Arnaout regiment together, and I thought it a funny sight. All who wished were talking; all who wished were smoking; some horses had an objection to standing with their heads to the front, and, as they could not find space for longitudinal position in the ranks, had either come forward, or fallen into the rear. The fool of the regiment, a boy of fourteen, with a dunce's cap of paper covered with spangles and some extraordinary clothes, was a few paces in advance, mounted on a large yew-necked, cadaverous steed; at his side was the tom-tom player, keeping up

a dull, monotonus sound on his instrument, which was varied by the report of a pistol, discharged every now and then in the ranks; the owner thinking, I suppose, something of the sort was necessary to enliven the scene.

The Colonel presently gave the Binbashee the order to advance, who called it out in a loud voice; the cry was taken up by each Yuzbashee at the head of his squadron, others repeated it, and, amidst the most frightful yelling, the advance took place. More screaming out commands, and the walk was successively changed into trot, canter, and gallop; after which no further orders could be given. The men got excited, they jostled each other, all order in the squadrons was lost, confusion reigned supreme, and the Bashi-Bazouks were in their glory; they hallooed, they yelled, they fired their pistols, faster and faster did they go, till the beast I bestrode, now fairly alarmed, took the bit between his teeth and ran away. Here then was something to hunt, and they availed themselves of it; a dozen or more pursued me across the plain in a most determined manner, and to a bystander it must have appeared a curious sight. I could not stop my horse, but I managed to form a large circle and to return to the troop just as with horses fairly brought to a stand-still, they had gained the top of a small rise. My pursuers came up after me, grinning their satisfaction at the chase I had given them; and after some minutes spent in matinal

pipes No. 2, the squadrons gradually re-formed, and stood ready for further action.

Colonel M—— came up. "They'll settle down to their work now," he said. He said truly. The regiment was put through different movements; and though they were not well done, though there was an unnecessary amount of shrieking out orders, they tried to do as well as they could, and I saw no more disorder like that which characterised the commencement. It appeared to me, from what I saw then and afterwards, that a great mistake was made in thus teaching the men their exercise; for, while I would not have advocated the lengthy instruction of the recruit in a regular cavalry regiment, I would have taught the men to move by threes, by fours, and by sections, before I attempted to move them by squadrons; and have got them to understand the leading principles of drill before I attempted to work them *en masse*.

After parade, we regaled ourselves with grapes—vineyards surrounded the camp on two sides, and the grapes were abundant and excellent; they were brought round for sale, as, of course, stealing them out of the vineyards was not allowed. I often thought it was a great trial to the men to see this splendid and luscious fruit within arm's-reach: occasionally they gave way to the temptation and helped themselves; but, as a rule, they were honest, and certainly quite as much so as Englishmen would have been under the same circumstances.

In the order-book of that day I found myself removed to the —— or Arab regiment. I told Colonel M—— I had applied for the exchange, giving him as my reason my wish to be where Hindostanee was more or less spoken. This certainly was *one* of my reasons; the other, which I have already alluded to, I did not think it necessary to mention. I went down to the town and hired an araba (a common wooden cart, drawn by bullocks or buffaloes) to remove my things, and migrated that same afternoon.

Lieutenant-Colonel S—— was glad to see me, invited me to mess with him till I could make my own arrangements, and, finding I had but one charger, offered me my choice of six or eight spare horses he had in the regiment. I chose two out of the number till I could buy horses for myself.

There was one troop in the regiment composed wholly of Affghans, the greater portion of whom spoke more or less Hindostanee: these he gave entirely over to me, and, calling the native officers of that troop, told them so.

They acquiesced readily, said they should be delighted to serve under my orders, and we parted equally well pleased with each other.

I was much struck with the difference between the native officers of the Arab and Albanian or Arnaout regiments; the former were much more submissive and respectful than the latter, who, in most cases, seemed to think their position and rank quite equal to

that of the English officers, and that, *ergò*, no particular deference was necessary.

I found myself in this regiment, in a few days, much better off than I had been with Colonel M——. My present commanding officer, though not overfond of work himself, had no objection to my trying to make soldiers out of the very crude animals he commanded; and finding very soon that he was most ready to follow out any views I suggested, and, in fact, gradually allowed me to superintend and direct the internal economy of the regiment, I became much interested in it, and worked hard in the vocation.

My first object was to secure the good-will of all the native commanders; so, the second or third day I was in the regiment, I assembled them all at my tent, and over coffee and pipes explained to them my views and wishes.

As they had seen that the commanding officer supported me in what I had hitherto done, they paid great attention to all I said, while I pointed out to them the chain of obedience and responsibility that should exist in a regiment. I told them, that in like manner as I was bound to obey Lieut.-Colonel S——, so they were bound to obey me, and their sub-native officers to obey them; that I was very far from wishing to curtail any of the authority they had in their different troops, for that, on the contrary, I would always support it to the utmost of my power; that I wished them to have and to exercise the power of punishment for any but very grave offences, when the case should be brought

before me, and that I would then either settle it myself, or bring it to the notice of the commanding officer; that there being no Binbashee or Colassee in the regiment (of which, by-the-bye, I was very glad, as I then thought, and still think, discipline was much better maintained without them), I wished them to report to me every morning on the state of their respective squadrons.

I made a few other arrangements, all with the view of pointing out to them, at this early stage, that while I expected implicit obedience myself, in the same manner as I rendered it to my commanding officer, I would support *their* authority by all the means in my power.

The military reader will, perhaps, think that all the above theories were so evident, that it was quite unnecessary to dilate on them; but I would beg of him to recollect who these men were to whom I spoke—wild Arabs, ignorant of the first laws of military organisation, totally unaccustomed to act in numbers; men who, in their desert warfare, had been accustomed to think and act each for himself, and who therefore required as much teaching as a raw recruit of the manner in which, by a chain of responsibility and obedience, by a descending scale of power and command, the wills of the many are made subservient to the will of one, and the chief of any great military body is enabled to direct successfully, and turn to advantage the courage and prowess of the whole. I explained all this to them, and they left me, promising

to follow out to the best of their power the broad rules I had laid down.

Every morning I had one troop out for exercise. I found them most willing and ready to learn, though not very bright; however, it was quite an amusement teaching them, they were all so cheerful and attentive.

One day, a tall, fine-looking man, who belonged to the Affghan troop, came to me to report that an Arab in another squadron had grossly insulted him before many others. "To such an extent did he insult me," he said —and he spoke in the Hindostanee—" that it was all I could do to prevent myself avenging the dishonour he cast upon me there and then; but my friends advised me to bring the matter before you in the first instance; and I do so, trusting you will see justice done; in default thereof," he added, and he showed his white teeth as he spoke, " I know how to wipe off the stain."

The man was trembling all over with excitement as he concluded. I commended him for the course he had taken, and promised to inquire into the case. I did so at once, and found he had told me true; many witnesses deposed to the gross and unprovoked insult he had received. I reported the case to the commanding officer, who begged me to do as I thought best. I directed the Arab to be confined some days in the guard-tent, and the Affghan was satisfied. The second day, however, he came to me, and begged the prisoner might be released, as he had apologised to him fully for what he had said, and they were once

more friends. I acceded to his request, and a short time afterwards they both appeared before me, saying that their quarrel had arisen out of a discussion as to their respective prowess in wrestling; and that now the quarrel was over, they wished to put the matter amicably to the test, and begged to know if I would witness it. Of course, I had no objection; and a ring being formed, the wrestling-match took place. It was severely contested; but resulted in the victory of the Affghan, who proved himself a perfect adept in the art.

I should not have mentioned this trifling incident had it not been that "Mahomet" the Affghan, at his own request, was attached to me as my orderly, and stayed with me to the end; and as the reader, I hope, will become well acquainted with him before he closes this book, I thought it well to show how we came together. He was a most singular specimen, this "Mahomet." An Affghan by birth, he had served in Dost Mahomed's army during the occupation of and retreat of the English army from Cabool in 1842. He often spoke to me of that retreat, and described its horrors. Though opposed to the English, he eulogised in glowing terms their conduct on that occasion; and indeed, to such an extent had his admiration been excited by their bravery, that he determined, as soon as he could, to take service under the English flag. After the Affghan war was concluded, he came to India and enlisted in Nicholson's Irregular Horse, in which force he served some time, and was

present at the battle of Goozerat, which concluded the Punjab campaign of 1848-49. Actuated by religious motives, he then determined to undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca on foot, which, after much hardship, he accomplished; and finding that he was then a beggar, he went on to Damascus, and there earned his livelihood in some shape or other, till the recruitment for the Bashi-Bazouk force commenced at that place. Overjoyed at the prospect of war, which was evidently his normal state, he at once took service again under our flag, and thus came where I found him.

He was a curious compound, this man of great bravery—strong feeling, a high sense of honour, and the most unconquerable laziness. Nothing pleased him so much as having anything to do in which there was considerable danger,—the greater its amount, the more extended his satisfaction. Nothing bored him more than performing any kind of work which was simply useful and in which no risk was incurred. He had the greatest contempt for any profession but that of a soldier. He looked upon man as a fighting animal, and the world as one great battle-field. His contempt of death was very remarkable; it never seemed to weigh for one moment in his calculations, except that I verily believe it rather made him lean to that side on which it was arrayed. With all this bravery, no lamb could be more gentle, more kind, than he was; no woman more affectionate. Ere we parted, he had conceived a great affection for me, and I am convinced he would

most readily have laid down his life to serve me. He was of an iron frame and constitution, could endure the most trying fatigue, was most abstemious in his habits,—eat once a day, and then the most simple food,—never touched spirituous liquors of any kind, never smoked tobacco in any shape, seldom laughed (he held that to be a woman's attribute), said his prayers regularly,—and, in short, to sum up all in a few words, was as good, as kind, as simple, as brave, and as lazy a man as it is possible to conceive.

When I had engaged Mahomet as my orderly, he brought his horse (a fine chestnut Arab stallion), and picketed him close to my tent. I shortly afterwards lent the poor fellow one of my revolvers. He was very proud of it, and tended it with all the care he could have given to a little child: so poor was he when he enlisted that he had no arms of his own.

About this time fresh bodies of recruits began to pour in with the English officers who had recruited them. One shipload of Arabs from Syria was put into the same regiment as myself. I found that a great difference existed between the different tribes of Arabs: great difference of character as well as person. This last batch who came to us were much more turbulent and unruly than those previously in the regiment had been. Another regiment of Arabs was also formed at this time. They appeared to me to be all of the same tribe as our last comers. I did not like what little I saw of them.

Detachments of recruits were also coming in from European Turkey, and either put into the regiments then existing, or formed into new ones. Many officers were sent out from England. A large medical staff also arrived. A whole host of veterinary surgeons was added to the number, as also trumpeters, farriers, hospital-dressers, and storekeepers. The camp was swelling visibly every day, for it soon, or rather a little later, consisted of no less than seven regiments scattered over a longitudinal space of perhaps three miles.

It was a peculiar sight to see the General, with all his staff, pass through the different regiments morning and evening. He never missed doing this. He was generally accompanied by both his daughters, and the cavalcade perhaps numbered twenty or thirty. We used to term it the General's tail, and it was an appropriate term enough, as it streamed out behind him on those grassy plains.

After much trouble, I had picked up two more chargers: the one, a coal-black Smyrna horse, about 15 hands 3 inches in height, I gave 70*l.* for, and never regretted it. He could jump a little, I found, when I bought him, and I soon improved his powers in that respect. He would have been a capital horse in a charge, for while he had great speed and weight, he was perfectly docile. The other, a smaller horse, I gave 45*l.* for: this, with two baggage-ponies, which cost me respectively 8*l.* and 10*l.*, completed my stable.

CHAPTER VII.

MUTINY, AND AN AFFAIR WITH THE FRENCH.

With the last detachment of Arabs from Syria arrived Brigadier B——, who was appointed to the command of the Arab brigade in camp. This officer sent for me some days after his arrival, and offered me the staff appointment of Quarter-Master of Brigade if I would accept it. I unfortunately did so, for I found on experience that the work (the charge of tents and all the duties attached to the Quarter-Master-General's department) was not of a kind that I liked. However, having taken the place, I did my best to be useful therein.

It was a part of my duty to ride out with the Brigadier every evening. We were doing this one day, when we saw what apparently was a regiment, or the best part of a regiment, moving swiftly over the plain. I galloped forward to see what it was, and found, after some trouble, by means of Mahomet and an interpreter I had with me, that it was the last regiment of Arabs that had arrived deserting. The Brigadier shortly came up, and then, little by little, I heard the whole

story. It seems they had not received their bread rations till one hour after the regular time, and so—they had deserted. It was a simple way of settling the business, that struck me as original; for, according to their language and manner, they were now *en route* for Syria, and had only stopped to give the above explanation!!

I was convinced that this desertion *en masse* was all nonsense, *id est*, that they never intended to desert at all. A great big hurley-burley fellow, a Yuzbashee who had got hold of one of the flags of the regiment, waved it insolently about and called to the men to come on, as it was no use talking to the Giaours (infidels). I asked the Brigadier if he would allow me to ride up and take the flag from him, as I felt quite sure a little determination, with the help of Mahomet and my pistols, would easily have secured it; but he negatived my proposition. I do not believe they really intended to desert, because they had no place to desert to; if a Turkish regiment, the case would have been very different; but these men spoke not the language of the country—were some thousands of miles from their own homes; and I am quite convinced they only made the movement in order to see how far they could have things their own way.

The Brigadier directed me to gallop down to General Beatson's house, and tell him of this revolt. I did so—found he was not there—and galloped back again as fast as I could. He had arrived in the

interim, and the men of the regiment when I came up were returning to their tents. I asked what had been done. I was told the General had ordered the store-keeper who gave out the bread to be confined, and had promised the men, if they would return, that they should not again be kept waiting. This gave satisfaction to the regiment, and they agreed to go back like good boys. On arriving at the camp, for we all returned together, I was selected by the General to superintend the serving out of the bread to all these men. Of course I did it; but it was a duty I did not like, for I felt it were better to have sent them supperless to bed with chains on their legs, and I could plainly see that they thought they had gained a grand victory.

This event saddened me much. I thought of it in connection with one that had occurred a short time before my arrival at the Dardanelles, which had been much talked of in camp, and was as follows:—A native officer of an Albanian regiment was placed in confinement by order of the General for the crime of rape. One of his fellow chiefs, by name Adem, not approving of this, came down to the town with upwards of 100 men, forcibly released the said prisoner, and then, appearing in a body before General Beatson's house, demanded his weapons. I am sorry to say their demands were acceded to, and his arms given up; on receiving which the whole body, with flags flying in a most mutinous manner, rode through the town and deserted!

Stranger still, though Major H——, an officer of the force, offered to collect a body and pursue the men, though the military Pasha tendered his assistance with his regular troops, the General declined to avail himself of either proposition, and thus the mutineers escaped unharmed and unhurt.

I believe that the fact of his wife and children being under the roof which was surrounded by these desperadoes, was the sole cause of the General acting as he did in giving up the arms; and indeed I think it very questionable what the result to them might have been had he followed another course. With regard to the non-pursuit the same excuse cannot be given, and in my opinion the General thus acted under the false impression he had conceived, and to which I trace all his failures,—that severity would not answer with the Bashi-Bazouks, and the belief I feel convinced he entertained, that *if* force were used to stop these deserters a much more extended evil might ensue.

When I pondered over these matters I felt that the moral effect with the troops must have been most disastrous, and that the way the Arab émeute just related had been treated was not calculated to lessen its bad effect. I felt sad, as I have said, when thinking it all over; for it appeared to me that the course of treatment pursued might one day result in a mutiny which all the courage, firmness, and determination of the whole English body present would be insufficient to quell.

A few days later a further body of Arab recruits

joined, and were attached to the regiment which had feigned to desert. No tents could be procured for them, and I reported the circumstance, stating that there were a few tents available in the town, which the Quarter-Master-General, however, was under engagement to return to Constantinople in four days.

I was directed to have them pitched, as it was thought that ere the four days elapsed other tents would be sent down from the stores. I did so, but when the day preceding that on which they were to be returned arrived, the expected ones to replace them had not appeared. There was no help for it, the old tents *must* go, and I was directed to explain this to the men, and to assure them they would not be without covering for, at the most, more than two days. The weather was fine and warm, and to men who were accustomed to a desert life, and sleeping under the blue sky, oftener than even under canvas, I could see no great hardship in the arrangement. I went, therefore, the previous evening and told them these tents *must* be struck early next morning, and carefully explained to them *why* it must be so, and that no exertion would be spared to procure them other covering as soon as possible. They made no objection; I thought the matter arranged, and gave my orders accordingly.

Next morning the men I sent to take the tents down to the town, and to put them on board the steamer, which started early, returned and told me that the

Arabs refused to allow them to be struck unless they were supplied at the same time with others. I had no authority to make them obey me, and reported the matter to the Brigadier B——, commanding the Arab brigade. I was told to await further directions. I know not if he acted on his own responsibility, but two hours later I received orders to make the round of the camp in the Arab brigade, to take every available tent from the English officers, even to making the junior ones club together by two or even three in one tent; and when, much to my disgust and that of others, I had obeyed this mission, the number still falling short for these pampered Arabs, I was directed by Brigadier B—— to give up the one solitary tent I possessed, he offering me room in his interpreter's, or, as he added, "if you dislike *that*—in my own!"

I had seen too much of military discipline to question an order from a superior officer, and I obeyed; the number deficient was made up, and not till then did these obliging Arabs allow the old ones to be struck and taken away.

When the duty was finished I gave in my resignation to the Brigadier, my immediate superior, giving as my reason the old hackneyed one of "private affairs." I have since thought that I was wrong not to give my real reason; but I knew the Brigadier was aware of it, and as I wanted to get away I thought my not doing so would be appreciated and might perhaps facilitate it. The application was submitted to the General com-

manding in the course of the day, who peremptorily refused to allow me to leave the force.

I was thus, *nolens volens*, obliged to stop; but it was with great reluctance I did so, for I could see no honour or profit to be gained in remaining with a force in which the men evidently dictated the terms on which their obedience was to be purchased.

Anyhow I determined to leave the appointment I held, and return to a regiment,—the Arab one I had been in, if possible; so I applied for it. I was told my offer would be attended to when another officer could be selected to relieve me.

A few days after the last affair I have related, a little before sunset, an officer who was passing through the head-quarter camp where I was, brought word that a row had taken place between the Arabs of the regiment, already concerned in both the desertion and tent-affair, and some Frenchmen belonging to the hospital at Nagara, close to the Dardanelles. The particulars I could not glean, for he had no time to tell them, but I ascertained the direction, and jumping on my black horse set off by myself, for Mahomet unfortunately was absent that evening. On arriving at the camp of the regiment I found all the men in an excited state; many were preparing their horses, while others who had already done so were galloping off as hard as they could in the direction of the sea or rather straits. I followed, passing some *en route*, though generally speaking they rode quite as quick as I did, when, within a couple of

hundred yards or so of the water, I met an officer, Captain P——, with a Frenchman on foot on either side of him, and surrounded by twenty or thirty Arabs. It appeared that a quarrel had taken place between about a dozen Frenchmen, convalescents of the Nagara Hospital, and a body of the Arab Bashi-Bazouks: what the real merits of the case were, nobody ever knew; the Frenchmen averred that the Bashis had gratuitously attacked them, while our Arabs declared that the Frenchmen had attempted to steal grapes from the vineyards near their camp, and that when they simply prevented it, one of their number had been beaten by two or three of the opposite side. At all events it seemed certain that some blows had passed, and on it being told in the camp that one of the Bashis had been struck by a giaour (infidel), numbers rushed to the scene of action. The Frenchmen finding themselves in a numerical minority, while they were not armed and the Bashis were, had beat a retreat, and, though hard-pressed, had succeeded in reaching the straits. Here, however, five or six of them were surrounded by the Arabs, and being in great bodily fear, and unable without arms to defend themselves, they had fairly taken like ducks to the water, two of them actually swimming out into the swift current, to a small vessel lying not far from the land; the others doubting, I suppose, their aquatic powers, stopped short when they had waded in up to their middles, and by gesticulations and signs (for of course the opponents could not con-

verse) entreated for mercy. The Arabs, balked of their prey by the screening waves, surrounded the spot, while some even urged their animals into the water in order to try and reach the Frenchmen with their long spears. About this time Captain P—— arrived, and having some authority with the men (for, if I remember right, he was in their regiment), he very gallantly induced them to desist, and liberated the poor Frenchmen from their watery position. What became of the others I know not; he lost them, I suppose, in the confusion, for when I met him he had only two by his side. While riding with him back towards camp I observed a number of the Arabs suddenly leave us, and start off at full gallop through the long grass. I could not see what they were after, for it was already beginning to get dark; but I saw them evidently chasing something, doubling and turning much like greyhounds after a hare. I followed them as quickly as I could, but ere I could catch them they had caught their prey, whatever it was, and surrounded it. I rode unceremoniously into the throng, for I suspected what the truth was; and there in their midst, surrounded by these wild horsemen brandishing their spears and gesticulating with excitement, I found a poor little Frenchman; he was the very picture of terror, his face ashy pale, and no sooner did he see me than he rushed to my side exclaiming "Sauvez-moi! Je vous supplie!"

I took his hand in mine, and he clung to my horse, entreating me not to leave him. The Arabs who

surrounded us were greatly excited, and I anticipated every moment some dreadful result. Determined however to save the man, if I could, I made signs to the Arabs to stand away; they recognised me from my uniform as an officer of the force, and to a certain extent they obeyed me. I saw however that their excitement and desire for revenge could not be controlled, and I felt sick at heart when I thought I should probably see the poor wretch, clinging to me for protection, cruelly butchered at my side. I knew not what to do; I dared not move from the spot, for while stationary I could to a certain extent keep them in check, but if once the crowd moved, I felt that any of the numerous spears around and behind me, might easily deal a death-thrust to the poor Frenchman, if not to myself also, for on the latter point I felt in no way assured. I looked around in vain for help, while he kept on ejaculating "Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! est ce que je serai sauvé?" and cried from very fear.

Two or three times had men left the circle and approached me, but seeing I perceived them, and waved them back, they had retired. I did not like to take out my revolver, for I thought the sight of it would perhaps hasten the catastrophe, and I hoped some other officer might yet join me. I passed some five minutes in this state, and a long and painful period of anxiety it was, but no help arrived. At last one man bolder than the rest advanced towards me with his long spear in his hand. I waved him back;

he did not heed. Hoping some around understood Hindostanee, I shrieked out, in that language, that I would have him hung if he hurt the Frenchman; still he advanced. I tried to take my pistol out of the holster, but my hand was so firmly grasped by the terror-stricken individual at my side, that I could not liberate it. I saw the head of the spear descend; I pulled back the Frenchman, but too late to avoid the blow, though I believe the movement saved his life; the steel point entered his hand, which he held out to save himself, and then glancing off struck him in the stomach, where, however, it inflicted but a very slight wound.

"Mon Dieu, mon Dieu! Je suis blessé," shrieked out the Frenchman, while the blood ran down his fingers, and he pressed his hand to his stomach.

I was enraged, mad with disgust at the barbarous act. Could I have got out my pistol, which the Frenchman again prevented by holding my hand with all the force of despair, the cowardly Arab had never seen another sun rise.

The deed done, the ruffian turned and quickly again mingled with the throng,—not, however, before I had observed his face, determined to call him to account for the act.

To my great joy, a man who spoke Hindostanee, and who I knew as belonging to my former regiment, came up at this moment, and through him I addressed those around me. I told them that whatever fault the man I held had committed should be inquired into, and I

pledged my word that I would not release him till I had delivered him to their General; that it was cowardly and unlike brave Arab warriors to attack a single unarmed man, who moreover belonged to a nation allied with us in the prosecution of the war; that I requested they would return quietly to their tents, and I would take two men with me and be answerable for the safe custody of the prisoner. I thought this style of reasoning was the most likely way to appease them; and also to carry through the difficulty the poor Frenchman, who, as I spoke, his face covered with blood which had been carried there by his wounded hand, looked up at me, unable to understand what was said, but with the most piteous expression of face conceivable, thinking no doubt that the result of the conversation would decide his fate.

The mass yielded to my reasoning, though there were many who evidently opposed it; but not waiting to hear out their arguments I at once moved forward. I told the man who had acted as my interpreter, and who I thought I could trust, to ride behind us, and allow no one to approach within spear's length. Thus did I advance, preceded by some, followed by others; and wishing most heartily I had another horse to put the Frenchman on, as I did not admire the foot pace, not knowing at what moment popular feeling and the arguments of the dissatisfied which I heard around me might turn the scale once more against him. To tell the truth, I thought my own position

also somewhat precarious. I was surrounded by a wild set of beings fully armed, who cared, I believe, for no laws human or divine, and who for the gratification of their passions, amongst which revenge held the first place, would dare much; they had been excited by the sight of blood, for several wounds had been given before I came up, and I believed them to thirst for more. I had interfered at the moment when they were about to accomplish their purpose, and I felt sure their feelings towards me were hostile, if on that account alone. Again, the Arab who had speared the man must know that retribution would await him, and that the danger thereof lay in the fact that *I* was returning to the camp to tell all; it was now nearly night, and I more than once caught sight of him close to me, always arguing in an excited manner to those around him. What was easier than to gratify on that lone spot their passion for revenge, and their hatred of the "Giaour" at one and the same time, and who should point out the murderers? As such thoughts passed through my mind, I glanced anxiously round, and urged the Frenchman forward at a speed he could ill sustain, weakened as he was by the great fear he had undergone, and the loss of blood which had flowed from the wound in his hand.

Suddenly a cry was raised by some to the left—it was taken up by those nearer me, and I thought for a moment it was the beginning of the end; I was much relieved therefore when I saw the crowd leave me, and

proceed down the slope that lay before us. I pierced the thickening darkness with my eyes, and saw a repetition of the hare-and-hounds scene I had witnessed near the water. I felt sick at heart. I thought for a moment of following them, but to what avail? perhaps to arrive too late, probably to sacrifice the life of him who grasped my arm, and, with tears running down his cheeks, begged me not to leave him. On the other hand, I was now free of them all, could strike off and gain the camp another way, could certainly save the poor Frenchman; and should I forego all this to run into fresh danger for a questionable advantage? I turned my head from the low ground before me, directed our course to one side of the track we had hitherto pursued, and muttered a short and fervent prayer for help to those below, who I feared so much needed it.

My thoughts soon however reverted to my own situation—night had fairly set in, and I could see nothing. I had left the track, but still I knew the direction of the head-quarter camp, and hoped to reach it safely; the great point I was anxious to avoid was stumbling in the dark on the camp of the Arab regiment which had sent forth the actors in this scene. I knew, if I did so, that the Frenchman's life would be placed in greater jeopardy than ever, and I endeavoured therefore to calculate with the greatest precision my route, for the Arab camp I knew lay nearly in a line between where I stood and my own.

By this time the Frenchman appeared much exhausted; so getting him to place his foot in the stirrup, I pulled him up behind me, he holding on by my waist, but not improving my coat with the blood which still flowed copiously from his hand. My good charger "Night" (so called from his entire coal-black colour) seemed to know that this double load was necessary, for he made no objection, but tossed his head in the air and seemed already to sniff the barley which he knew awaited him at home.

We had proceeded thus a few minutes when my horse pricked his ears and gave a sharp neigh. I dug my spurs hastily into his side to keep him quiet, for I knew how addicted he was to this habit, and that it would much endanger the chance of passing unobserved if we happened to skirt near the Arab camp. The punishment made him restless; he was a high-spirited beast, and not accustomed to it, and I could not get him quiet again; he appeared to connect the wounds in his flanks and the Frenchman on his quarter in the light of cause and effect, and as a consequence wished to get rid of him. He began bucking and pitching the poor fellow forward on the cantle of the saddle till he could bear it no longer, and begged me to let him get down. I allowed him to do so, and no sooner had he alighted than "Night," thinking the difficulty, whatever it was, at an end, and that neighing might now be indulged in to any extent, commenced in a most determined style. I was much annoyed; I was quite alive

to the danger the Frenchman's life was in, and it suited me little that "Night" should enhance it.

It was too late, however; I soon saw that the mischief was done, for just as I became sensible by a buzzing sound to my right that we were passing the camp (which I knew by its position must be the Arab one), a figure on horseback appeared through the gloom, which, by the carbine at the back, the long spear ornamented with ostrich-feathers, and other accoutrements, I quickly recognised as one of the Arabs whom I was so anxious to avoid. I am afraid "Night" felt the sharp prongs of my spurs at that moment more keenly than he ever did before or since, for in my feeling of annoyance and rage I dug them rowels deep into his side. The man, who was mounted on a splendid black Arabian, came close up to us, and no sooner recognised two "giaours," or infidels, than he appeared highly delighted. It appeared afterwards that he had been sent out by some native officers of his regiment as sentry on the outskirts of the camp, whether with reference to the French affair or not was uncertain; but, at all events, his orders were to bring anybody he found passing into the presence of his native chief, and thus, when he lit upon us in the manner described, he proceeded at once to signify that we must accompany him into the mass of tents, the dusky outlines of which I could now see at a little distance.

Now this in no way suited my plans, and as it was

only by signs he had expressed his wishes and intentions, I proceeded in the same dumb language to express my disapprobation. I knew, however, the term by which they spoke of General Beatson, so, pointing in the direction of the head-quarter camp, I ejaculated the words "General Pasha." I know not if he understood what I meant, but at all events it was of no avail; he insisted on our going into his camp with him, and on my not heeding his now violent gestures, he laid hold of my horse's rein. My Saxon blood was not proof against this; "Night" bounded forward at my command, and I was quickly free, while with difficulty I restrained myself from dealing my dusky companion a good English blow between the eyes as I passed him—a moment more, however, and he was again at my side (though not by the side of the Frenchman, who dodged first to the right and then to the left, evidently actuated by the unpleasant idea that his back and the long spear might become acquainted), and again insisted on our accompanying him. I knew not what to do; had I been alone (with as good a reason as I then had for not obeying the demand of a sentry), I should simply have refused, and if he tried to use force or his arms, I would quietly have shot him—but the case here was very different; I knew that at the first sound of fire-arms (and he would probably have used his when he saw me determined to oppose him) the camp would be roused, and many would sally forth. I would have set pursuit at defiance in the dark night, and mounted as I

was,—but then the Frenchman? Could I leave him in that case to the death which would certainly await him? and what should I gain if I got rid of the Arab at my side, his vacancy being filled up by a dozen of his friends? I pondered all these things in my mind, and I felt I was in a fix.

The Arab, seeing me hesitate once more, again by signs urged me to proceed, and accompanied his persuasions by suddenly riding round to the side on which the Frenchman stood, and pricking him with his spear. I was enraged beyond measure, and quite forgetting the possible consequences of the act, I turned round, caught the Arab by the throat with my right hand, while with my left I dealt him a blow in the face: at that minute we were surrounded by about twenty of his compatriots, who had been attracted from the camp, which was now close, by the cry the Frenchman had uttered when he was pricked with the lance. Very luckily (for otherwise I really know not what would have occurred) there was a native officer of my old regiment amongst them who spoke Hindostanee. I hurriedly explained to him the whole affair, which he repeated to those around. An immense number had, by the time it was concluded, sallied forth from the camp, and we were surrounded by a dense crowd of foot and horse, amongst whom the sentry was evidently trying hard to get up a demonstration in his favour; but I had told the first story, and he was not successful.

We now proceeded to the camp; it was really almost

ludicrous to see the way the poor Frenchman did it; he would not leave my side for a minute, but he was in continual fear of "ces sacrées lances," as he called them, and proceeded hopping first on one side, then on the other, turning right round to face his imaginary foes, and putting his body into the strangest positions conceivable. I did not wonder at his fears, nor was I totally free from them on his account; but as the native officers of the regiment who had come out were evidently disposed to do him no harm, I did not anticipate anything serious.

On arrival at the regiment I gave the Frenchman over to the head native officer, who assured me he would allow no one to molest him, and then rode off with all speed to the head-quarter camp.

General Beatson had come up to dine that evening, and I met him and all his staff outside the tent. They had heard rumours of the "fracas" that had taken place, and were anxious to hear more. Under the firm impression that the Frenchmen who I saw pursued into the hollow had been murdered, I said so, and told the whole or the greater part of the story I have now related. Messengers, both English and native, were sent out to bring in all the wanderers who could be found, and then we went in to dinner.

By eight or nine o'clock in the evening they all arrived, and to my astonishment not a man had been killed. There were, however, five men more or less wounded; one had a nasty sabre-cut on the head,

another a spear-wound in the back, a third had been cut across the thigh and arm, and so on. I never could account for some of them having escaped with their lives, nor can I to this day. However, so it was; and though it was certainly a very nasty affair, it was not so bad in reality as I thought.

Had such men as could be identified as having been concerned in the row been severely punished, and an apology for their conduct, with a detail of the punishments, been sent to the French commandant, I do not believe that any ill-will would have arisen out of the affair; but the matter was not treated in this way at all. Every attempt was made to prove that the Bashi-Bazouks were in the right, the Frenchmen in the wrong, even to the extent of swearing violence had been used as much on one side as the other, and that therefore the Frenchmen, as the first aggressors, were the most culpable. The further mistakes that were made in dealing with this affair shall form the subject of another chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

COURT OF INQUIRY—EXTRAORDINARY SCENES AT THE DARDANELLES.

A COURT of inquiry was directed to assemble by order of General Beatson, to investigate the affair related in the last chapter.

It appeared to me that it was not conducted in as fair a manner as it should have been; the evidence taken was all one-sided, and I thought with a view to make out a case against the French. The Arabs deposed to the fact that one of their party had been struck across the arm with a sword, and that several had been most severely beaten with sticks. Had this been true they could have shown marks of the injuries, but though most anxiously sought for, nothing of the kind could be found. Again, I was not pleased with the manner in which the two surgeons, examined as to the wounds the Frenchmen had received, gave their evidence; they spoke of the injuries as very slight, when, before the court sat, or rather on the previous evening, I heard them tell a very different tale.

I waited to be called upon for my evidence, as the officers composing the court knew I had been present during the affray; but I waited in vain. At last, seeing that the proceedings would be closed if I did not speak, I stood up and demanded to be allowed to give my testimony. To my astonishment the president, Brigadier B——, refused to take down my evidence, or to admit it in any way into the proceedings. I asked for the reason, but none was vouchsafed to me. I left the tent, much disgusted at what I could not but consider the very unfair way in which the whole thing was managed, and during the day pondered how I should act further in the matter, for I was quite determined not to let it rest there.

Before evening, however, the president of the court sent for me, and said General Beatson wished to have my evidence in writing. I gave it in the following words:—

"Yesterday evening, while endeavouring to quell the disturbance that had arisen between some men of the 5th Regiment and some French soldiers, I saw a number of the mounted Arabs surround a French soldier—there were probably 40 or 50 men round him; and on forcing my way into the midst of the crowd I saw the said soldier, who, in a state of great alarm, immediately rushed and caught hold of my right hand. The Binbashee of the 5th Regiment, who was close to the said French soldier, was endeavouring by every means to keep his men quiet. I made signs to him to stand on the other side of the French soldier,

and he did so. I was about to move on with him, when one of the mounted Arabs came forward with his lance, and thrust the point against him; he did this in a manner that showed his intention was to wound, if not to kill the man. The noise and confusion around me was so great, that all I could do was to make signs to the Binbashee to recognise the man, and I did my best to do so myself. This morning, at the court of inquiry, a man came in, whom I at once recognised, to the best of my knowledge and belief, to be the man who speared the said French soldier. I also saw that he was aware I recognised him. The name of the man appears to be 'Yuzbashee Ameen;' and I am as confident to his identity as it is possible for any man to be who sees another in such a scene of confusion. The Binbashee of the 5th Regiment knows who the man is, and doubtless can corroborate my evidence. Captain Ameen had a dress on covered with gold braid; he appeared a man about 40 to 45 years of age. This occurred a short time before dark. I went with Brigadier-General Brett to the 5th Regiment lines yesterday evening, and I then saw the man, and I identified him as the person who speared the French soldier."

The above was, it appears, attached to the proceedings of the court of inquiry, and it is transcribed in a pamphlet printed by General Beatson* as the

* War Department and the Bashi-Buzouks, by Major-General W. F. Beatson. W. Clowes and Son, 14, Charing Cross.

evidence of the eleventh witness in this case; two, the twelfth and thirteenth, appearing *after* it, from which it would seem as if it had been given in court in due form, which was not the case. A note is also in the said pamphlet appended to my evidence as follows:—"Little importance was attached to this officer's evidence, on account of the state of excitement in which he was at the time of the disturbance. It was positively proved that he mistook the person of Yuzbashee Ameen."

The scenes I witnessed that evening certainly excited me, as cruel attacks by armed men on defenceless and unarmed ones always would; but why should my evidence be discredited on that account? With regard to mistaking the person of Yuzbashee Ameen, who speared the French soldier at my side, General Beatson will, I am sure, excuse me if I remark that the only evidence in opposition to the man's identity was that of his comrades, who were interested in screening him, and that the opinion on the subject expressed by the court of inquiry was not of much value when, as shown already, they had refused to take my evidence merely because they knew it would prejudice the case they wished to make out.

I shall, however, make no further comments on this affair. The facts I quote, and the evidence in detail, may be seen by anybody in the pamphlet alluded to. Of the merits of the case the reader must judge for himself.

I must now glance, *en passant*, at the causes and reasons which led to General Beatson's resigning his command, before I enter upon the final scenes of his administration.

The Bashi-Bazouk Force, or "Beatson's Horse," as it was then called, was under the Foreign Office, and consequently under the direction of Lord Stratford, our ambassador at the Court of Constantinople. This arrangement held good until the beginning of September last year (1855), when the Force was attached to and placed under the orders of the commandant of the Turkish Contingent.

Lord Stratford, who was very anxious for the success of the Bashi-Bazouk experiment, a creation of his own, knowing that it was necessary the General commanding should have a civil adviser by his side who was acquainted with the habits and peculiarities of the wild tribes about to be organised, sent down (if not at the General's request, still with his concurrence) Mr. S—— (of whom I have written before), to assist in any difficult civil question which might arise, and to advise on all points connected with the civil administration of the force. There certainly never was a being more fitted for this difficult post than Mr. S——; to high talents and ability he united strong practical good sense, and a remarkably ready power of taking in the merits of any case at a glance, and advising thereon with that sagacity for which all his acts were remarkable. Bred in the school of diplomacy he well knew how to keep

his own counsel, and it was about as impossible to ruffle his temper, which was very even, as to draw out of him any information which his regard for the public good or the interests of others told him had better not be known.

It should not have been a difficult task to keep on good terms with him—he was as much, or nearly as much, interested in the success of the Bashi-Bazouks as the General or even Lord Stratford, of whom it was a well-known hobby, and would I am sure have done, as indeed he did do, all in his power to promote the success of what was regarded by many as a dangerous experiment.

Unfortunately, however, General Beatson soon learnt to regard him, to use his own language, "as placed at the Dardanelles on the part of Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy in the worst sense of the phrase,"* and through this coloured medium I presume viewed all his actions, and consequently rejected his counsels, doing so on the plea that being a non-military man he was not competent to offer advice on military subjects. When this was reported to Lord Stratford in the early part of August, he applied to General Vivian, who commanded the Turkish Contingent, to furnish an officer of standing to proceed to the Dardanelles and act conjointly with Mr. S——.

The consequence thereof was the arrival of General Neill, who, it was said, came down with extraordinary

* Pamphlet—"War Department and the Bashi-Bazouks," page 44.

powers from Lord Stratford, though no one ever knew what they were.

I cannot trace out the internal working of the scenes that occurred at this time between these three, *id est*, General Beatson, General Neill, and Mr. S——; but the result was soon evident to all—they did not agree. General Beatson and his staff on one side, General Neill and Mr. S—— on the other, could in no way assimilate; and the open warfare, or rather estrangement which shortly ensued, was the common subject of conversation in camp.

Some time before that of which I now write, Captain B——, the author of "Trip to Medina and Mecca," had joined the force, and being constituted chief of the General's staff, held an important post in the deliberations and councils which were daily held at the General's house. There can be no doubt he was and is an officer of considerable talent, but somehow or other he did not exercise it to good advantage in his connection with "Beatson's Horse." He rather (as I believed at the time, and find confirmed by a letter he published in the *Times* last December) excited the General to regard with a magnified aspect what he considered the wrongs he had suffered instead of leading him to conciliate the powers above, and urging him to substitute for the severity of his remarks to constituted authorities stricter discipline with his soldiers, which doubtless was the necessary charge required.

At the same time I certainly think that sending General Neill to the Dardanelles was a *great* mistake: either General Beatson was fit to command the force or he was not; if the former, he required near him no military officer in the very anomalous position which at the command of his superiors General Neill held; if the latter, it were better to have suspended our Chief at once than subject him to the indignity the act entailed, and which I consider nothing could justify, leaving out the fact that a man of General Beatson's peculiar temperament was sure, as the events shortly proved, to be driven to greater excesses thereby.

Towards the end of September I was surprised one morning to find the plain between the high ground where our camps were and the town, covered with Turkish regular troops: 500 infantry, 250 cavalry, 250 artillery, and eight field-pieces were there with the guns in position, and the war steamer "Oberon" lying off in the straits, and commanding the approaches to the town.

All sorts of reports were bruited about the camp, and it was not easy to get at the truth, which, however, was as follows:—

In an affray between the Turkish police and some Bashi-Bazouks, a pistol was fired by a native officer of our Irregulars, which wounded one of the former. The Pasha addressed General Beatson on the subject, saying that as he had declined issuing orders to the effect

that the soldiers should, when entering the town, do so unarmed, he (the Pasha) was determined to resort to coercive measures, unless he received an intimation that day that the order previously asked for had been given.

General Beatson declined taking any steps in the matter, on the ground that doing so would be opposed to the habits of the tribes he commanded.

The Pasha then invited the consuls of all nations at the Dardanelles to confer with him, and at a meeting held the Pasha determined to resort to force to bring about what he conceived to be his just demands. Mr. S—— entreated that twenty-four hours' delay or grace might be given to General Beatson, in hopes that he would avail himself of the interval to carry out the much-desired order. As, however, at the expiration of that period things were as before, the troops were ordered out, H.M. Steamer "Oberon" was directed to lie off the town to command the approaches, and the steamer "Redpole" despatched with all speed to Constantinople to advise our Ambassador of the extraordinary position of affairs at the Dardanelles.

I may state here, that the very extensive demonstration was in consequence of the Pasha's anxiety that no collision should take place, and he wisely judged the best way to avoid the chance thereof was to show how useless any such attempt would prove.

There was a great commotion in camp; the native officers and men thought themselves insulted, and

more than one regiment debated how far they could and would oppose force to force, and drive back the Pasha's troops. Things began to look very serious, and I anticipated a great row, which, however, was happily avoided; for whatever share General Beatson may have had in bringing about this state of things by not listening to the suggestions offered to him by the Pasha, General Neill, and Mr. S——, the evil once present he behaved very well, and did all in his power to prevent any outbreak, by giving orders to commanding officers directing them to allow no men to go armed into the town. These orders were followed out, and the quiet way in which the men submitted in many cases, which I myself saw, to leave their arms behind them, is the strongest proof what a mistake was made by our leader in not having given such an order some time before.

It was all over by evening; no opposition having been attempted, and upwards of 100 Bashi-Bazouks who entered the town doing so unarmed, the troops were withdrawn.

Some absurdities were however committed by certain officers of our force; for while the troops were in position that day, and the excitement ran high, they, five in number, rode down to the opposing pickets, and complained, in no measured terms, to the Turkish General "Muherdeen Bey," of the insult implied by the armed demonstration. The assurance that no insult was intended did not appease these Irregular champions,

for they successively challenged the astonished Turk to single combat, and while he stood with open mouth endeavouring to take in the magnitude of the absurdity, they increased his astonishment by flinging down five gloves in token of defiance, and rode off!

Such is a short account of the scenes the detail of which, being sent to Constantinople, was the immediate cause of General Beatson's supercession. General Smith appeared (sent by General Vivian, who commanded the Turkish Contingent, to which we had for some time been attached), with orders to assume command of the Irregular Cavalry, and General Beatson was directed to repair to Constantinople.

The latter portion of the command General Beatson obeyed, the former he declined to follow out, and made over the command during his absence to his second in command.

The reasons he gave were as follows: I quote his own letter to General Smith, dated Dardanelles, 30th Sept., 1855:—

"DARDANELLES, *30th September*, 1855.

"SIR,

"I have the honour to inform you, with reference to the communication made to me by you yesterday, that I have made arrangements to proceed to-day to head-quarters at Buyukdere, in conformity with General Vivian's instructions. With regard to that portion of the order which makes over to you the command of the Irregular Horse, I take upon myself the responsibility of

directing Brigadier-General Brett to assume temporary command of this Force, until fresh instructions shall have been received from General Vivian. The peculiar exigencies of the case justify me, I believe, in the step, which, as your senior officer, I now take, feeling that the organisation of this Force, and the large sum expended on it by Government, will be greatly perilled by any other proceeding. At the same time this measure will in no way prevent your obtaining from this Force any information you may require. Brigadier-General Brett has been officially directed to supply you with any official documents you may require.

(Signed) "W. F. BEATSON, Major-General."

"Major-General Smith,
&c. &c."

He never assumed command after that time. A few days later General Smith was constituted our chief by an order from General Vivian, and General Beatson's connection with the Bashi-Bazouks was at an end.*

Rumours are rife at this moment that another officer of high standing has lately accused General Beatson of inciting his officers at that period to refuse allegiance to any commandant but himself; and, *on dit*, that the accusation will shortly be matter of inquiry, but whether as against accuser or accused is not known. Certain it is, however, that all who are supposed to

* General Beatson had tendered his resignation, which was accepted.

know anything of the question have been sent for, some from long distances and at great expense.

Under these circumstances it would ill become me to give any opinion whatever of General Beatson's merits as a commandant. I am not writing a criticism on his acts in the first place, but simply a narrative of Bashi-Bazouk life. In this he has of course figured more or less: but the facts concerning him of which I have written are known to others; and they are, I believe, fairly and truthfully stated.

CHAPTER IX.

SEBASTOPOL—DETACHED COMMAND.

SHORTLY after General Beatson had left us, I had a very severe attack of jaundice, and, at the advice of a medical board, leave of absence for three weeks was granted to me.

I took advantage of this to visit Constantinople once more; and, as during the few days I stopped there, my health was much improved, I determined to spend the balance of my leave in the Crimea. Sebastopol had been taken about three weeks before, but the north side of the town was still in possession of the Russians; and even if I saw no fighting, yet in those blood-stained trenches, in the whole of that ever-to-be-famous battle-field, and in that dismantled city there was quite enough of interest to attract me.

I met at Constantinople an officer of the Bashi-Bazouks, Major H——, who had also leave of absence, and who agreed to accompany me. He was a truly charming companion for an expedition of the kind, and I hailed the prospect of his society with real pleasure.

We got a passage in a small transport to Balaclava, arrived there after a passage of fifty-five hours, and at once set out on an exploring expedition. Having walked straight up to "the front," and finding a cousin of mine in one of the regiments encamped there, who had been all through the bloody siege, we placed ourselves under his guidance, and visited successively all the famous spots around.

I had brought my Affghan with me, and it was amusing to see his delight;—as I have said before, he looked on the world as one large battle-field, and considered the normal state of society was war;—well, here he was, then, in his element, and his joy knew no bounds. He was never tired of examining the earthworks, putting his head through the embrasures, getting at top of the parapets to see how he could have fought from that position, scrambling into the ditch on one side and up on the other, just to try, as he said, if it was easy; and, in short, going on in a way that made everybody who saw him think him mad;—mad he certainly was, too, with excitement and gratification, as he saw all the wonders of that ever-to-be-famous battle-field. He was continually asking me if I supposed there had ever been as much fighting on a few square miles since the world began as there; and on my telling him I thought not, he would clap his hands with childish joy, and mutter to himself "What tales to tell when I go home!"

As we walked down the valley so appropriately called

the 'Valley of Death,' he was as much astonished as myself at the number of round-shot there: they were in such numbers that, if evenly spread, they would have covered the whole of the ground comprised between those fatal hills; as it was, in some places they were six and eight deep, but irregularly dispersed about. This enormous number was partly owing to the hills on either side, down which many of them rolled when they struck the ground sufficiently spent, and at a sufficiently acute angle not to bury themselves.

Mahomet could hardly believe his eyes when he saw them;—"Are they all Russian shot?" he asked.

I told him they were.

"I did not think there were so many in all the world. Oh, this has been a glorious war! What would I have given to have stood where I stand now, when they almost darkened the air, as they must have done!"

I could scarcely appreciate his longing; but I agreed with him as to the magnitude of the contest, and consoled him by the information that when we got inside the town he would be under fire.

"Ah," he said, "that's *some* consolation; but how tame to what it must have been?—why, I don't hear the report of a gun now from the Russian Forts more than once every three or four minutes, and I was told yesterday that, during the bombardment, there was not a second without one."

He sighed as he concluded; regretting, I suppose,

that his chance of being present at the hell-fire of shot he described had passed away for ever; and then followed me in silence.

My first view of Sebastopol astonished me—the town looked so white and so regular: at the distance of half a mile you could not have told the city had sustained any bombardment at all; it was only when you came nearer, and saw the numberless marks of shot on every building, the dismantled roofs, and charred timbers, that you realised what an awful scene had been raging there for months past.

Major H——, Mahomet, and I wandered together over the whole city. I looked in vain for any building that had escaped the universal destruction: walking about was not very safe, for the Russians from their forts on the north side kept up a pretty sharp fire of shot and shell into the poor town, which having been battered by French and English for so many months, was now receiving its *coup de grace* from those whom it had sheltered. This reflection struck me very painfully, as from a height I saw the city sleeping in its desolation, and every now and then perceived a hurtling shot or a fiery shell sent by Russian hands, adding to the destruction apparent all round.

Mahomet enjoyed it much; whenever he heard a shot coming, he would, if under shelter of a house, run out into the open street, evidently determined not to take any unfair advantage of the iron messenger. When it had passed, he would smile; if it came *very*

close, he would look gratefully round to thank me for having brought him into such an Elysium of pleasure; his only sorrow appeared to be, that whereas the shot were falling in many parts of the city, he could only be in one place, and if he thought that any particular portion of the town had the best of it, *i. e.* had the largest share of the iron storm, he would at once propose that we should go there.

In one of the main streets of the city, running down to the harbour in one long straight line, and thus, perhaps, more exposed to the Russian shot than any other, was a French Café—where will you not find them? Still I should have as soon expected to stumble on one in the middle of the great Sahara Desert as here. I at once determined to patronise the spirited proprietor. In we went. The building used for the purpose was at the side of a court-yard, and, strange to say, appeared to have escaped the general conflagration. It was a stable, or rather must have been one. There was not much furniture—two cross-legged camp-tables, and half a dozen rickety camp-stools, was all it boasted. I called for the landlord, and expected to see a moustached, hard-featured, "vieux Français." What was my astonishment when a curtain at one side of the stable was drawn, and a pretty lively French girl of two or three and twenty appeared.

"Avez-vous du café?" I said.

"Non, Monsieur, mais j'en ferai tout de suite; asseyez-vous, je vous prie," handing us the chairs or stools.

We sat down, and she commenced making coffee. Presently a round shot came whizzing along, and fell near the court-yard. Away went Mahomet outside, and I could not induce him to enter again. He did not appear inclined to fling away a single chance, and when his share of the coffee was prepared, he took it "al fresco."

"Is it not rather uncomfortable, living here?" said the English officer who was with me, to our fair hostess.

"No," she replied, "I'm pretty well accustomed to it."

"Well, but don't you think there's a good deal of danger?" he continued.

"Not much; and if there was, I shouldn't mind it; one *must* live, and it pays me keeping this *café*."

"Do you never have shots through the roof?" I said.

"I think we had three altogether last week, but none the last three days."

"What do you do in such cases or when they fall in the yard?"

"Why, if they are round shot, I take no notice of them; if shells, I run into the yard or the *café*, and shut the door after me."

We laughed at the spirited grisette's *naïveté*, and calling Mahomet in, I told him much of what she had said. He looked at her with admiration, while a strong expression of love beamed in his face. "No wonder,"

he said, "the Belatie loge (Europeans) are good soldiers, when they have such women as mothers; she is worthy to have been the Prophet's bride!" I translated the compliment into French for her benefit; on hearing it she made Mahomet a low curtesy, and smiled sweetly on him. The look was too much for my Affghan warrior, he blushed rosy red through his copper-coloured skin, and covered with confusion fairly ran out of the building!

When we paid for our coffee I found the fair Frenchwoman charged us for the honour of taking refreshment under fire in her company, but I am sure we did not grudge her the amount. As she bade us adieu she followed us out into the court, and there she again encountered Mahomet; true to her French instincts, she went straight up to him, enjoying his confusion, held out her hand, and wished him good bye; he scarcely touched the tips of her fingers, as colouring again, like a maiden of sixteen, he turned round and left the yard.

On emerging into the wide street, which was the one running straight down to the harbour, and easily seen in its whole length from the Russian forts, a dozen French soldiers were passing down its centre; they were carrying the partly putrified carcase of some animal on a door, with the intention, I suppose, of flinging it into the water. I entered into conversation with one of them; but ere we had proceeded a couple of hundred yards, it was evident we were seen from

the opposite side of the harbour, for the small forts there belched forth masses of white smoke, and the sound of passing shot and shell could plainly be distinguished.

"Those devils of Russians see well," said my French companion; "we shall have one of those whistling messengers amongst us, unless we retire."

"Put down your load, and run!" cried out a corporal with the party, as a huge shell was heard approaching with that very peculiar *increasing* sound which denotes its advent in a direct line with yourself.

The order was scarcely necessary. Down went the door and carcase with a bang, and the bearers ran to find protection where they could. I was somewhat confused, as I knew not the locality; but the momentarily increasing sound warned me not to delay. I followed one of the soldiers behind the angle of a wall at the side of the street, and at the moment I arrived, heard a loud explosion. I looked round; the shell had evidently burst in the air, for there was the small white cloud which denotes it just above the street; while below stood Mahomet, in the centre of the road, with his arms folded on his breast, looking up with the eye of an amateur at the white smoke above, and feeling, I doubt not, a certain degree of contempt for what he thought the undignified haste of the soldiers and myself!

The fragments of the shell fell all around us, but no one was hurt. I said to Mahomet, "You were very

unwise to stay where you did; you could do no good by it, and you exposed your life unnecessarily."

"It's all kismut kebaht" (language or decree of fate), he replied, "and as I know it is written what day, what hour, and when I shall die, I do not suppose I can by any acts of my own alter the ordination of God."

I knew before he was a fatalist, and I felt sure argument would avail nothing. As however I valued, and did not wish him to expose his life unnecessarily, I tried another line of reasoning. "True courage, Mahomet," I said, "is shown when a man meets boldly that danger he either cannot avoid, or his duty enjoins him to face, not by incurring unnecessary and foolish risks, as I saw you do just now."

He looked at me for a moment, as if trying to divine my purpose; he appeared to have succeeded, as he answered:—

"I thank you for the interest you show in me; but, as I did not question *your* courage when I saw you run behind that house, why then should you question *my* wisdom in stopping where I did?"

Even had I wished to continue the discussion with him, I could not conveniently have done so, for we were still marks for the shot, which ever and anon came bounding up the street, or crashing through the buildings on either side, and it was madness to stop there, so we turned off into a by-lane, where we were comparatively safe.

I visited the Redan again that evening, the ground on the English side was literally covered with Minié bullets. Mahomet, astonished at the quantity, sat down, and collecting them cleared the space he could reach with his hands without changing his position: this could not have been more than a circle of eight feet diameter, and yet he filled his handkerchief with upwards of one hundred bullets; and I do not believe the space he chose was more thickly covered than other parts. This will give a faint idea of the storm of lead which had fallen around.

When at the Malakhoff a little later, a shell was sent up from the Russian forts, on the northern side of the harbour, right into the interior of that field-work. I mention it on account of the distance, which was very great.

I was astonished to see how close the French trenches were to the Malakhoff as compared with ours to the Redan. Without wishing in any way to detract from our Allies' well-won fame, no one who has seen the two places can think them parallel cases, in as far as facility of attack went, nor did I ever hear the French affirm it.

I am sure I shall be excused for not entering into a description of Sebastopol, the trenches, the camp, &c.; the ground has been so much trodden over, in a double sense, that I could not hope to do more than repeat what others have said, and the world knows now nearly by heart. So, with the very little I *have*

written about the Crimea, I will bid it adieu, and ask the reader to accompany me on board that magnificent screw steamer the "Himalaya," in which the Captain, a peculiarly gentleman-like and agreeable man, gave me a free passage to Constantinople.

Oh, the difference, nay, the positive pleasure, of going to sea in a well-conducted and magnificently-fitted huge vessel like the "Himalaya," as compared to the misery of smaller craft. I hope, and I believe that the art of ship-building is yet in its infancy, and that, as in size, the "Great Britain" and "Himalaya" have been surpassed by that Leviathan the "Great Eastern," now building; so that monster in marine architecture is but the first of a series of equally large, if not larger, vessels, which shall some day cover the seas, and render voyages on that element as pleasant and agreeable as a sojourn of three or four weeks now is at a pleasant watering-place.

Constantinople had no charms to detain me; and as I heard on arrival there, that the whole of the Osmanli Irregular Cavalry (this was the new name) was ordered to Shumla, and would march at once, I delayed not a day in joining.

On arrival, I found some of the regiments had gone already, and that the remainder were leaving at intervals of two or three days after each other. There seemed to be in camp but one opinion of General Smith, our new commandant,—everybody liked him; and as there then was no speculation even of the peace,

which a few months later cut up our warlike hopes, we all anticipated a brilliant campaign next year (1856), when, by judicious treatment through the winter, the Bashi-Bazouks were made, what I never doubted they could be made, good soldiers of.

Two days after I returned, General Smith sent for me. He had selected me, he said, for a special mission, which he carefully explained. A native officer, a Yuzbashee of one of the Arnaout regiments, had some time back been sent to Monastir, in Western Turkey, by General Beatson, to collect a number of mounted men, who were represented by the said native officer as only waiting to be enlisted. Late accounts received from the British Consul at that place showed that the Yuzbashee had succeeded in getting together about eighty men and horses, but that it seemed he had been and was carrying on the whole affair as a money speculation, and that the presence of an English officer was absolutely necessary to superintend the further recruitment, as also to disburse a large sum of money, which the native officer now applied for.

"You will march straight to Monastir without any delay, Captain Money, and take charge of the men and all the money accounts connected with the recruitment there; having done so, you will report fully to me at Shumla on the state of things, and await further orders."

Such were the succinct orders I received, with directions to start the next morning.

I was pleased with the mission. At last, I said to myself, I shall have an opportunity of trying how far my opinion of the manner in which these wild fellows should be treated is correct. I shall be my own master, and can do as I will. From what the General said, I shall very likely stop at Monastir all the winter; so, during four or five months, I can put my theory of discipline into practice, and either succeed or fail—if the latter, I see not that I shall be worse off than I should certainly be if I followed out the Dardanelles system of treatment. I never could understand why, under that system, the Bashi-Bazouks are supposed to be actuated by different feelings to the rest of mankind, insensible to the same hope of advancement, to the same fear of punishment—at all events I shall endeavour to treat them by the broad, plain rules of common sense, and if I fail, I shall at least have the satisfaction of knowing I have acted in the manner the experience of centuries upon centuries points out as the best.

"Mahomet" was delighted at the prospect of going with me; I suppose he anticipated increased consequence of position from my mission. He expatiated also in glowing terms on the dangers of the roads to Western Turkey, how they were infested with robbers, and the great probability of an encounter with some of these outlaws on the march. These contingencies he enumerated as part of *the advantages* I should derive; and I verily believe the prospect of a dozen cut-throats attacking him in a lone jungle path some morning,

when he could scarcely see them, added much to his pleasure in anticipation!

We were to start next morning, and that evening I saw the farewell scene between a half-brother he had in the force and himself.* They embraced in the eastern fashion, laying their hands on one another's shoulders. They seemed much attached, for they were both deeply affected. The brother came up to me, took my hand between both his, and kissing it, while hot tears dropped upon it, said: "May God bless you, and dispose you to behave well to my brother; he tells me you are very good to him. Value him, for I know that in the hour of danger he will not fail you." I told him I did not doubt his brother's courage, but that at present there was no danger in prospect; and asking him for the pipe he held in his hand (which act I knew he would esteem), I sat down, smoked, and tried to alleviate the pain of their separation, which was evidently very great.

* The Arab in the illustration is the said half-brother. I have unfortunately no drawing of the faithful Mahomet.

CHAPTER X.

THE JOURNEY AND ITS INCIDENTS.

On the second of November I started *en route* for Monastir. My party consisted of Mr. M——, brother of the accountant of the Land Transport Corps, at the Dardanelles; Mahomet; my English servant (a boy about seventeen years old); my syce or groom; and a servant in the same capacity belonging to Mr. M——.

I had my three chargers and two baggage-ponies; these with the horses brought by Mr. M——, Mahomet's charger, my servant's horse, and one or two other spare steeds, made up a number of sixteen or twenty horses in all. I had heard on good authority that the road was much infested with robbers, so we determined, as a general rule, to keep with our baggage beasts.

I knew little or nothing of the manner of travelling in Turkey at that time, and I felt, therefore, at starting all the feeling of novelty and expectation usual in such cases; but it was more than ignorance of the interior of the country, which I was about to traverse, which made me spring out of my rickety camp-bed, on the morning of departure, with a light and expectant

heart. I knew I was departing on a responsible mission, one which, if I executed it well, would advance me as an officer in the force; would also give me the good opinion of the General commanding; would probably, in the next year's campaign, place me in a still more responsible and independent position; besides this, I should now have an opportunity of trying my own theory of treatment with the Bashi-Bazouks; of seeing if soldiers could *really* be made of them; of fashioning them after my own fancy,—all these hopes, these expectations, this vanity, if you will, made me as light-hearted when I set out on that morning as ever I have felt in my life.

We were a queer-looking set as we wound down some of the low hills bordering the straits on the Asiatic side. I had on one of the Indian "solar topees," or felt hats; below, a rough cotton-padded red shooting-coat, whity-brown breeches, and high jack-boots, completed my attire. My friend Mr. M—— was dressed in some equally singular style. My English boy had encased his head with a huge and gaudy Arab scarf, the ends of which streaming out a yard at least behind him, as he occasionally galloped on, made him look very un-English, though I really cannot say what he resembled. Mahomet, in honour of our first day's journey, having put on his best and gold-braided clothes, shone in the early sunshine like any ephemeral butterfly, while the syces, in any dress you will, or no dress at all (for that was really the case with one of

them), perched on the first of the string of baggage-ponies (the remainder being tied one behind another), looked very much from their extreme hideousness as if put there to set off in stronger colours, by contrast, the beauty of the scenery around.

Though we started by eleven o'clock, we did not reach the end of our first day's march, the Asiatic side, opposite Gälipoli, till dark. There we found one regiment of the Bashis, and part of another, waiting to cross over the Straits *en route* for Shumla. I have not, among divers wretched nights I can remember, spent many worse than this. While we had yet one hour of road left it began to rain, and by the time we arrived we were wet through. Every place in the town, a small one, was occupied; but one or two English officers had managed to get some tents pitched, and into these we crawled. We had no food, no beds, no anything with us; for one of our syces had gone the wrong way with the baggage-ponies, and we were quite dependent on the charity of others. No one had much; so still hungry, very wet and cold, we lay down on the damp ground, and having smoked divers pipes (the best substitute for food), we tried in sleep to forget our troubles. Rheumatism awoke me more than once; the tent had not been well pitched, and the rain came through, not improving the malady.

The morning was no better than the night had been, but luckily there were boats enough for all, and after a rather rough passage across the Straits, with eight

or ten horses crammed into one frail craft, we breakfasted at Galipoli.

This town is only famous as having been the first landing-place of the Anglo-French army in Turkey when the war with Russia commenced, and a few of the names given by the French to the streets still exist. I was anxious to get on with my march quickly, and I did not delay here, but ere night closed in had accomplished some thirty miles of the circuitous route, following the bend of the Gulf of Saros. From this point I followed a different course to what the regiments of Bashi-Bazouks did, who were marching to Shumla; they proceeding north towards Adrianople and the Balkan mountains, while I struck off to the left, along the shores of the Mediterranean, or more properly the Archipelagean Sea.

I am not going to drag the reader after me, as some travellers do, day by day on my journey, when incident there was none; suffice it to say, that I followed the road on the sea-coast of Rumelia, passing through the villages of Ruskoi, Feret, and Makri; and that at the second of these places I felt the first symptom of the very violent attack of intermittent fever I suffered from on this march. I paid little attention to it at the commencement, thinking, according to the theory I hold, that nature if unaided will work her own cure, and consequently continued marching, day after day, twenty, five-and-twenty, or even thirty miles; but I got worse and worse; at last I could no longer sit on my

horse. My young friend, Mr. M——, was exceedingly kind, and did all he could to assist in getting me the best houses procurable in the villages, and exerting himself in every way to save me exertion and fatigue; but my weakness got greater and greater, till at last my state was positively deplorable. I would have stopped and nursed myself before I had arrived at this extreme pitch of feebleness, had I been able to find any house where I could get the smallest amount of comfort or repose, but I sought it in vain; vermin, the curse of Turkey, abounded in such numbers, that, fatigued and ill as I was, I often during the long night prayed morning might appear, and my toils (for riding was then a real toil) might commence anew. Oh, the misery of that week or ten days! I do not think I shall ever forget it. I have during my life endured much hardship, and encountered many dangers, but it was always, till then, with the life-blood bounding healthily through my veins, and the concomitant high spirits produced thereby, and I never, till I received that lesson on the solitary road of Rumelia, could appreciate the small amount of hardship or fatigue which can depress the man, who is sick at heart, from the physical sickness under which his body labours.

But to return to my tale. I was too ill to proceed, but feared to remain. I thought, and with justice, that if I halted one day, I should never start again. A decent-sized town, by name Ghummurdjinar, was but three or four days' march a-head, and I hoped to

drag myself so far. They told me I should find a Greek doctor there; and I eagerly counted each weary mile that passed, which lessened our distance from this Elysium. My fever came on daily about three o'clock, and lasted without any intermission till ten or eleven at night, leaving me after each attack weaker and weaker.

It was most gratifying and comforting to me (for what a real comfort sympathy is in severe illness) to observe my faithful follower, Mahomet. Twenty times in the night would he present himself by my bedside, —now with a little sherbet to quench my feverish thirst, now with a wet towel to cool my burning brow, now to smooth the blanket on which I lay (for I had no regular bed) and try to drive off the hideous vermin which crawled around; while every time, if I were awake, he would speak so kindly, so cheeringly, so hopefully, that even, in spite of myself, and my settled conviction that my end was drawing near, I would smile on him in return, and speak of that future which I thought could never arrive for me.

There remained but two marches to Ghummurdjinar, and the Turkish guide assured me, that at the village which would be our halting-place that evening I should find a clean house, and might stay there, and send for the Greek doctor from the town. After a day of intense suffering,—held on my horse much of the way, for I was too weak to sit alone,—we reached the said village. What was my horror to find it worse

than even the generality we had passed through. The houses were not dirty, they were filthy; and it was plain by the dirt outside, and around the door, as well as on the persons of the inhabitants, what might be expected within, and in what countless numbers probably fleas and bugs held their nightly gambols in the squalid tenements.

I saw at once that all idea of remaining on the morrow must be abandoned, and we set about finding the best house we could for the night; bad indeed was the best, and a most miserable night I passed. I never in my life saw or felt such a multitude of vermin as I encountered ere morning broke. I got no sleep, and the next day, of course, found me worse than ever. I tried to get a bullock-cart, but after riding in it a mile or two over the rough mountain tracts, I was obliged to abandon it, the shaking and jolting being so insufferable. I know not how I got through that long and miserable day; extreme weakness, and oft-repeated fever, had nearly destroyed all my reasoning powers, and I took no note of time, but sat on my horse, often supported on either side, the picture of misery.

Night had set in ere we reached "Ghummurdjinar," and there was not light enough for me to appreciate the outward look of comfort about the house, which by the Pasha's kindness, and the activity of Mahomet, who I had sent on a-head, had been provided for me. I was carried up the stairs to the best and largest room in the house, and put at once into a bed, under the

directions of a Jewish doctor, who had been summoned to attend me. Seeing how exhausted I was, he at once gave me some reviving cordial, which enabled me in a few minutes to look around.

I found myself in a splendid room, fitted up magnificently in the peculiar eastern style, that is to say, with a superb silk divan or couch for reclining upon, running along the whole length of one side, the walls ornamented with mirrors and quaint paintings, and a few very handsome chairs ranged along the wall; but no tables or any other sort of furniture whatever was there. The Jewish doctor, an amiable-looking man, with a sagacious countenance, and very long, black beard, was compounding some further medicine by my bedside. On the divan, together with my friend Mr. M——, who was smoking the chibouque of welcome, sat in the peculiar manner common to all Orientals, the master of the house. Now with one leg doubled up under him, now with both, now with legs *à la Chinoise*, leaning on rich cushions in all the luxury of perfect idleness and *abandon*, he too inhaled the fumes of the all-absorbing tobacco. Two or three attendants stood around, regarding with evident curiosity the sick English officer, as one of a nation so famous by report, and probably the first of Britain's sons they had ever seen in that out-of-the-way part of Turkey. My bed was in the centre of this large room; my English readers must not fancy a huge four-poster with its multitudinous hangings and absurd curtain appendages; what I lay

upon was a much simpler affair, and very likely much more comfortable. On a large Turkey carpet was spread a capacious wool mattress, encased in a sack of snow-white linen, while a thick warm cotton padded covering, also in a similar receptacle made of linen below, and richly coloured silk above, completed the bed. Bedstead there was none, nor indeed was it wanted, for the luxurious and thick Turkey carpet on which the mattress lay answered all its purposes.

What I first observed when I opened my eyes, though I describe it last, was a figure near the foot of my bed; this was a maiden of eighteen or twenty, who, with large hazel eyes, was intently regarding me, until my gaze met hers, when she instantly looked down. As if ashamed, however, of the shyness it indicated, she quickly raised her eyelids, and blushing rosy-red, took from a small stool a tray with a vase of sweetmeats and a goblet of water on it, and coming boldly up to my bedside presented it to me; while her father, who was sitting and smoking on the divan, made me the salaam of welcome and pressed me to take some of the refreshment. I did so in the Oriental manner, which consists in swallowing a tea-spoonful of the preserve and then drinking some of the water, and thanked the fair maiden who had brought it with perhaps more zeal than her act, universal amongst the Christians of Turkey, merited, were it not that her extreme beauty had so much interested me.

In truth, she was very lovely—when pretty, I know

no women who are more strictly so, at least while young, than the Greek and other Christian inhabitants of Turkey—and this half-Greek and half-Rumelian maiden was a rare specimen of her class:—her face, a regular oval, had every feature in it so perfect that nothing was left to wish for; and while rapt in admiration of her full face, I was not prepared for the perfect Grecian outline her profile presented. She wore her hair in the manner common to the Christian women of Turkey, that is to say, parted simply across the forehead and hanging down loose behind, in her case, far below the waist.

Altogether she was a rare picture of loveliness; and as I gazed upon the loose hair of brightest gold, which fell in such thick masses below the ends of the handkerchief fastened round her head, the long eyelashes which swept her cheek, the bright and playful glance of her eyes, and her perfect Grecian profile, I could not help repeating to myself, half aloud, Byron's famous lines, in his ode to the "Maid of Athens:"—

"By those tresses unconfined,
Woo'd by each Ægean wind,—
By those lids, whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge,—
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ,"

and wishing I could translate them for her benefit.

My knowledge of Turkish was very limited at that time, so I had brought an interpreter with me from the Dardanelles, and by his aid I now thanked the master of the house for his kindness, drank a cup of tea, and

then in spite of those around me and the fair girl who every now and then came in, I fell into a deep slumber which lasted till midnight, when I awoke with a greatly increased accession of fever, and my head in a delirious state.

The common course of such a malady is well known, and I shall not bore the reader with mine; suffice it, that I met with the greatest kindness and attention from my friend Mr. M——, the master of the house, his daughter, Mahomet, and, in short, every one around; and that the skill of the Jewish doctor, combined with a strong constitution, got the better of the malady, and allowed me to leave Ghummurdjinar four days later.

As I shook the fair daughter by the hand at parting, and thanked her for all she had done, I quite felt I was leaving none too early for my own peace; for, however nice a thing love may be, I knew a love-sick Bashi would be a useless animal, and tender thoughts about the last kind of feelings I ought to encourage with the wild wandering soldier's life I had in prospect.

Though the fever had left me, the remaining weakness made the journey on horseback difficult, and I dragged my way, with much discomfort, through Macedonia, passing through the towns of Kavalla and Seres, to Salonica.

This latter is a very large fortified city on the gulf of the same name. It is surrounded with a masonry wall of great thickness, considerable height, and of a

very ancient date, but which, however perfect as a means of defence before the days of artillery, would not, of course, avail much now. It is celebrated for having been visited by the apostle St. Paul, and they even now show the spot or chair from which he preached. Like all eastern cities, it has very narrow streets, very irregular houses, very badly paved routes, no pavement for foot-passengers, and no light whatever at night. It is one of the largest and most important towns in Turkey, and boasts Consuls from each and every European power. Its harbour is filled with shipping; its quays are thronged with seamen from all nations; its streets are knee-deep in mud and dirt; its bazaars are Constantinople on a smaller and dirtier scale; its inhabitants are Turkish, Greek, Bulgarian, Jews, Wallachian, Moldavian, Servian, Arabs, Italian, Spanish, German, French, and English, following in their respective numbers their position in the above list; its languages are as various as its denizens, and it presents altogether the strangest *mêlée* of nations, tongues, costumes, wealth, magnificence, and dirt of any place I have ever seen.

CHAPTER XI.

MONASTIR—AN IMPORTANT EVENT.

DISTANCES in Turkey are always measured by hours. One hour's distance is what a horse will walk on a fair track, or road, during that time. Monastir, to which place I was bound, was, it appeared, thirty-two hours from Salonica, or, in other words, at the rate of 3½ miles to an hour, 112 miles; this was a four days' journey, and I left Salonica, after halting there a couple of days to recruit my strength, looking anxiously forward to the end of my weary march, of which I was getting very tired.

There are several mountain passes between Salonica and Monastir, famous for the brigands which infest the forests on either side. At such places we always kept close to our baggage-beasts, and partly owing, I suppose, to our being well armed, we passed through without let or hindrance.

The first view of Monastir from the south-west is very remarkable, standing at the top of a mountain perhaps 3000 feet high, and a considerable elevation above the distant town, which is itself 2000 feet above the sea level, you see it at a distance of 25 miles

from you. When I arrived, the mountains which bordered the plain on the opposite sides, as well as that on which I stood, were covered half-way down to their bases with snow, which set off in bold relief the dark verdure below. The air was in that clear and rarified state which enables you to see objects at great distances; and I could not credit my guide when he assured me that we had yet eight hours' ride before us.

We halted at a small village on the mountain side, and there I received a letter from Mr. H——, the British Consul at Monastir, which he had sent out by one of his mounted retainers, begging me to send word at what hour I should enter the city, as he wished to make the necessary arrangements to insure my being met in a proper manner.

I scarcely understood what was meant by this, though I found out later; and it was not long ere I felt very grateful for the kind consideration he had showed in the matter; for, knowing as he did, that the position I was destined to hold at Monastir, and the respect which would be shown me by the large society there, depended much on the manner in which I entered the town, he had very kindly determined to give me nothing to complain of on that score.

The inhabitants of Turkey judge so much of a person's consequence and position by the homage paid to him, and the retinue he has around, that I verily believe had I that evening entered Monastir, the simple way-worn dusty traveller I was, with beasts

jaded by a five hundred mile march, and attendants in much the same state, I could not for a long time, and without much trouble, have acquired the high standing and position in the varied society of the place which the Consul's kindness enabled me to attain that very evening.

I sent back the messenger with a note saying I should arrive about four o'clock in the afternoon; and having taken some refreshment, consisting of the clotted and soured milk common in Turkey, called "yowart," I set off to perform the last twenty miles of the long march I had accomplished.

When we had descended the mountain, and entered upon the plain of Monastir, I found the country dreadfully under water. You speak in England of a country being under water, but the expression has a very different application in Turkey. What we understand by it in England is water in some places lying one or two feet deep: in Turkey it means an inundation, that often compels you to swim your horse; and so it was here for upwards of ten miles, more than four-fifths of the track was submerged, and in many places it was so deep that the horses could not touch the bottom. They are accustomed to it, however, and neither the beast nor the rider generally cares about it in Turkey; but it was very cold that day, and I did care about it vastly. My clothes were quickly saturated, and they froze hard in consequence of the low temperature, while I was continually emptying my large jack-boots

of the water, for which they formed so ready a receptacle.

As we approached Monastir, the ground, in consequence of rising a little, became somewhat drier, and the sun coming out warm from a bank of clouds, behind which it had been hid all the morning, dried me a little. When about four miles from the town, I saw a little distance a-head, a large body of horsemen drawn up on the side of the road. As I approached, I perceived they were the men I had come to command. With their Yuzbashee or Captain at their head, they had, agreeably to the directions of the Consul, come out to meet me. They were eighty in number, mounted in various ways —some had very good horses, some had very bad ones; some had superb gold-embroidered saddles, some had saddles of the commonest country kind, while with others a piece of sheepskin, or even a bit of old sacking, was the only covering the animal had, but it seemed in no way to lower the estimation of the owner in the excellence of his "turn-out."

A muttered murmur of welcome was audible as I advanced to their Yuzbashee, who sat in front of the troop; and having saluted him, and received his profound salute in return, took his hand and shook it. I did this to show them the intimate relations I wished to establish between us, and I was right in judging that they would appreciate it, for the muttered welcomes burst forth into shouts of "Meer Aly Hosh Gelmish!" (Welcome Colonel!); and at least a couple

of dozen pistols were simultaneously fired off in all directions, the balls whizzing about in an unpleasant style, more especially that of the Yuzbashee's pistol, which, no sooner had I released his hand, than he discharged, but in such a hurried and uncertain manner that he nearly shot me through the head!!

I explained by a few signs and words, as well as I could, that the ball had passed close to me, and laughed as I did so. The joke seemed to tickle them amazingly. They yelled with delight, and, as I afterwards learnt, were not a little pleased that they had a Commandant who could and did laugh at such a thing.

Our first meeting could not have taken place under happier auspices; and, anxious to conclude it at this favourable point, I moved on, followed by the whole troop in column of sections.

We had not ridden very far before we were met by another, but less numerous, cavalcade. This turned out to be the English and French Consuls, with the whole of their staff, and some of the principal inhabitants of the town, who had most kindly come out to welcome me. The English Consul came up, and introduced himself and the French Consul, Monsieur B——. I thanked them for their great kindness, which, as I told them, was so much more than I could have expected or hoped for; and finding that Monsieur B—— did not speak English, we all three chatted together for some time in French.

The gentlemen of Monastir who had accompanied

the Consuls were then severally introduced to me; some spoke French, some Turkish, others nothing but Greek; but with the help of the Consul's interpreter, who spoke every language under the sun, I managed to say something in return to the many kind welcomes which greeted me from each.

While this ceremony of introduction had been going on, the Yuzbashee of the troop had brought about twenty men in front, as an advanced guard, accompanied by a tom-tom (small drum) player, so that when we moved on again I had a guard of honour in front and rear.

I had never been made so much of in my life before, and I really began to think I must be a person of some importance. I tried to conceal my astonishment, and look as if such a reception was an everyday affair with me. To the English Consul, Mr. H——, however, I again expressed my thanks for what had been done, and my gratitude at the part he had taken in it. He smiled in reply, which smile I did not understand; but the next turn in the road explained it to me. A little further on was the better half of a regiment of Turkish Regular Cavalry, perhaps three or four hundred men, splendidly mounted and accoutred, drawn up in double files by the side of the road, with the officers in front. As I came up and received their salute, I made up my mind this was one of those cases in life when surprise is bad policy; and if after that a brigade of guns, headed by the Pasha himself, had met

me, no astonishment would, I think, have been visible on my countenance.

Salutes given and returned, a word of thanks to the Major who commanded the body, and we all moved on once more; the whole of the Turkish cavalry preceding us as an advanced guard, while my Albanians followed in the rear. A number of musicians had come out of the town, and with their rude instruments made such a noise, that the shouts of the Albanians, and the incessant discharge of their pistols, could be but faintly heard.

Thus did I enter the town of Monastir. And when at last the whole cavalcade drew up in front of Mr. H——'s house, and I made them all one final salute before dismounting and entering, I was certainly in a state of doubt as to whether an Arabian Nights' dream had not usurped the place of sober everyday waking reality.

I threw myself on the divan in the drawing-room when I entered, and mechanically taking the chibouque given to me by a Turkish attendant, shut my eyes and tried to awake. I should have accomplished the other thing and fallen asleep shortly, had I not been roused by the offer of coffee, which, when taken, somewhat cleared my confused intellects, and allowed me to enter into conversation with Mr. H—— and Monsieur B——, who alone of all the party had come in.

The English Consul insisted on my remaining as his guest for a fortnight at least; and in accepting the

invitation so cordially tendered, I felt very thankful at having found such a companion after the utter absence of all conversible society to which I had been doomed during my long march.

I quickly recovered my health and strength under the hospitable roof of Mr. H——. The winter had commenced with marked severity: the mountains around had put on their winter covering from top to bottom, when I awoke on the morning after my arrival; and the bright, bracing, intensely cold weather which we enjoyed for three consecutive weeks did me great good.

I entered on my duties without any delay. I found that the Yuzbashee had been sent to Monastir, in consequence of a false representation he had made at head-quarters, that there were one hundred men with their horses in that town waiting to be enlisted. His object was the pecuniary advantage he hoped to realise by recruiting in that district; and I found, from information given me by the Consul, that immediately he arrived he had commenced buying horses wherever he could get them, and selling them again to the recruits he enlisted, at of course we presumed an enhanced price. The reader who takes any interest in the question, will kindly remember that by the constitution of the Irregular Cavalry every man provided his own horse, *i. e.* received from the Government a sum of money for the purpose, which amount was supposed to be refunded by monthly deductions from his pay.

The very improper course the Yuzbashee had followed, to say nothing of the false statement he had made at head-quarters, would have authorised me in at once dismissing him from the service, but such a step would have been fraught with much danger. He had himself enlisted all the men in the troop; many were under obligations to him for promotion, or other favours received; a few, and those invariably of the highest ranks he had to bestow, *viz.* Chouses or Sergeants, were his own relations, and had much influence with the mass below them;—under all these circumstances, I felt assured that the dismissal of the Yuzbashee, in the existing state of things, would be the signal for a mutiny in the troop, and I did not feel authorised to attempt it. I determined, on the contrary, rather to ignore what had passed; and when I had acquired that influence with all the men, which I hoped a month or two would accomplish, to bring the Yuzbashee then to account, should he in the interim endeavour to repeat any such conduct.

I knew also that one of the component necessities for respect and obedience from wild tribes like those I had now to govern, is the conviction in their minds that their personal welfare is the object of solicitude to their leader; and I determined therefore to turn the past acts of the Yuzbashee to my advantage in that respect. This I did by telling him and the assembled troop, that as it appeared he (the Yuzbashee) had bought all their horses himself, I should myself personally

inspect each and every one, discard all such as were in any way unfit for the service, and then fix the proper value of every horse I received into the troop; or, in other words, if any of them had agreed to pay larger prices than the animals they bestrode were worth, I would not allow them to do so.

This gave immense satisfaction to the men; and when they saw, at the lengthened inspection I held, that I was no tyro in horseflesh or its value, and fixed a fair price on all the horses I received, thereby saving many from the extortions the Yuzbashee had attempted, they were more than ever gratified.

Those horses, about one-third of the whole number, which I cast, I directed the recruits themselves to replace, which was gradually done; and thus in about a fortnight from the date of my arrival, all the men were well mounted, satisfied with the prices they had given for their chargers, and pleased with me for the part I had taken.

The native officer himself was not, on the whole, dissatisfied; 'tis true many horses were thrown back on his hands, and he had to sell them at a loss; but I conceive he scarcely expected all would pass at the prices he had put on them; and he was not sorry to be so well out of what he feared might prove a nasty scrape.

When this business was all settled, and it was evident to me that I was already in good favour with the troop, I took occasion to harangue them one day

on parade. I told them I was pleased with the appearance they now presented, and their conduct since I had been with them, and I trusted we should always continue on good terms with each other; that I wished them clearly to understand, I should always consult their interests as far as lay in my power, and that I was ready moreover to listen to the complaint of the lowest soldier in the troop; in short, I would do all I could to promote their welfare and amusement, and that I did not wish in any way to curb their liberties or interfere with their habits; but that they must be careful, and not mistake all this leniency for weakness; for if I thought it necessary to give any order, I would have it carried out at all hazards, nay,—the greater the opposition, the more determined I should be; for I held, that on the day any military commander allowed those below him to dictate the line which in their opinion he ought to pursue, on that day did he cease to be the head of that body, and far better were it for both him and them if he quietly resigned the command.

My address was well received; but their assurances of implicit obedience did not deceive me, for I well knew, from their very natures, habits, and prejudices, a great struggle would take place, sooner or later, before they would be content, nay, would even understand the necessity of that total submission which they all now professed themselves so ready to accord.

It came sooner than I expected; and in the remark-

able way which I will now relate: that no one shall think I have highly coloured the following scene, I may mention that the facts are known, and can be vouched for as regards their accuracy, by both the English and French Consuls at Monastir.

The men had been in the habit of firing their pistols in the town, generally merely for effect, but sometimes with serious intent, when they were engaged in any violent disputes. The English Consul wrote to me one day, after I had left his hospitable roof and taken a house of my own, and begged I would put a stop to the habit, as many of the inhabitants had complained of it.

I at once assured him I would do so, and, collecting my men, the same day, I explained my object, and told them that if they wished to discharge their pistols they must do it outside the town; and that as I found the same order had been given by their Yuzbashee before my arrival, at the instigation of the English Consul, and they had not obeyed it, I warned them that the first man who now transgressed it should be publicly flogged in front of all the rest.

They all professed their willingness and intention to obey me, and I left them.

Three days later I received a further communication from the English Consul, saying that one of my Bashi-Bazouks had, the night before, discharged his pistol through the ceiling of a house, and very nearly wounded an old man lying ill in bed in the room above.

I proceeded into the town to the locality indicated, and there found the house, the hole the bullet had made through the ceiling, and the old man, who certainly had a narrow escape, the ball having passed through a portion of his bed-clothes. It was easy to establish the identity of the soldier who had done it, as he was known, not only to those in the house, but also to the Yuzbashee of the troop; and so I at once went to the barracks or "Han," where my soldiers lodged, sent for the culprit, and put him in irons until the next morning, when I purposed flogging him.

Before leaving "the Han," I told all the soldiers there, that they must assemble the next morning at ten o'clock, as the punishment would then take place.

I heard a few murmurs in the troop, but I did not wait to ascertain what their purport was; for, telling the Yuzbashee to take care of the prisoner, and to have all ready the next morning at the hour mentioned, I left the yard.

That evening, after dinner, I was told the Yuzbashee wished to speak to me. I directed him to be admitted. He sat down when motioned to do so, and I saw he wished to speak on some subject, which, like all Orientals, he for a long time studiously avoided.

This is a very peculiar and characteristic trait of all eastern nations; the more important to themselves the object for which they seek you, so much the more carefully do they conceal it, and talk on any and every subject but that.

I enjoyed much, on this occasion, watching my native officer; I had given him a pipe, and every moment he was not smoking, he was talking, evidently fearful I should ask him the direct object of his visit.

At last, after much delay and many apologies for what he was going to say, he entered upon it. The man who had fired the pistol was, he said, a great favourite in the troop; he was, it appeared, partly drunk when he committed the act, and as no real harm had been done, he came, deputed by all the soldiers, to beg that I would forgive him, and release him from confinement.

I thought for a moment before I answered, and then I told the Yuzbashee I was sorry I could not accede to their request,—the man had, in common with all the others, heard me forbid pistols being fired in the town, had also heard the punishment that disobedience would entail, and he must now be made to feel I had not spoken in vain.

The Yuzbashee's face fell as I concluded, and he again entreated me to forgive the prisoner, which I again positively refused to do. He left me shortly afterwards, and said at parting, he trusted I should think it over in the night. I did not answer him, but gave him leave to retire.

The next morning, before breakfast, the Yuzbashee, with three native sub-officers, came to me. They again all entreated forgiveness for the man, and so earnestly that I was sure they were actuated by some more powerful

motive than the mere wish to spare the delinquent. I called the Yuzbashee aside, and asked him plainly the reason. He seemed relieved at the question, and answered:

"The fact is, we all like you much as a commander, and don't wish anything to happen that can take you away from us."

I partly understood him, but I pretended not, and replied:

"I have no intention of leaving you."

"We hope not," said the Yuzbashee, "but why, then, push matters to that point that will endanger your remaining?"

"What do you mean?" I plainly asked.

"I mean as to punishing this man. He is a great favourite in the troop, and the men are much excited about it."

"Then," I answered, "the fact is that you think I incur personal danger by carrying out the flogging I had intended."

"Yes," he replied, evidently pleased at my stating the case so plainly, and thinking, I presume, the fact would have its weight, "I do not think you can safely do so."

"And tell me," I said, "what part shall you take in the matter?"

"Oh, yours—you are my commander; but what can *I* do against eighty men."

"Leave all that to me," I replied. "Go back to the

Han, and when asked the result of your mission, say, the Meer Aly (Colonel or Commander) said he would give his answer when he came. Tell them nothing more. I shall be there at the time appointed."

He looked as if he wished to speak again, but I left him and went to breakfast.

I sent for Mahomet, and speaking to him in Hindostanee, which the Turkish attendants could not understand, asked him if my pistol was properly cleaned and loaded. He seemed doubtful, but said he would at once see to it. I directed him to do so, and also to look to his own (the one I had given him, a five-chambered revolver), as I might require the use of both that morning.

He asked no questions but disappeared, and returned in half an hour with the pistols loaded, and in a trustworthy state.

I directed him to hide one of them in his sash, and merely expose the pistol I had given him, and which he always carried. He did so, and we then left the house together. *En route* to the Han I called for a doctor, an Italian, whom I had engaged to give medical aid to the detachment, and whom I thought it well should be with me, corporal punishment in the army never being administered except in the presence of a surgeon.

I did not tell him the position of affairs. I did not think it necessary. My interpreter (an able Greek, whom I had picked up at Monastir) was also with me;

and as he had been present at the scene that morning, was quite aware of how things stood.

The said interpreter I had a high opinion of. He was a gentleman by birth, manner, and conversation; had travelled much, had been highly recommended to me, and I thought would probably, in case the necessity arose, prove trustworthy and faithful. I had cautioned him to say nothing to the doctor, so our conversation, which was carried on in French, as they both spoke it, was on general subjects.

On our way I told Mahomet shortly, in Hindostanee, which was an unknown tongue to the others, what had passed, and the object I had in view. I bid him merely keep near me. He took it all in at once, and seemed not a little pleased. "I hope you'll be firm," was all he said, and then dropped in the rear again.

We arrived at the Han—by-the-bye, I ought to describe a Han before I proceed. The word signifies literally an inn or place of entertainment for man and horse. 'Tis very different, however, to any place of the kind in England. It generally consists of a large open yard, with probably a fountain and water-tank in the middle, whence the horses of travellers are watered. The yard is surrounded by low buildings, the ground-floor in their whole length being used for stables, and the upper story as rooms for travellers. A wooden balcony or passage runs right round the yard in front of the said travellers' rooms. It is generally eight or

ten feet broad, supported by poles in front of the stable, and under one roof with the remainder of the building.

This Han had been hired by the Consul before my arrival for the soldiers, and was very convenient for that purpose, as the men were all together and close to their horses.

On our arrival in the court-yard I saw the men walking about and collected in knots, talking to each other in an excited state. I summoned the Yuzbashee and all the troop together, and made them form up on foot in the yard. I then said that I had that morning been requested to forgive the prisoner, and that I would willingly have done it, were I not convinced it would be no kindness to either him or them to do so. I had told them all, the first man who fired a pistol in the town should be punished, and I must keep my word.

As I concluded, two or three, answering in rank to our sergeants and corporals, came forward and again begged the prisoner might be forgiven, while the troop seemed anxiously to await my answer. I answered, saying I was sorry to refuse them again, but that if I had intended to forgive the prisoner, I should have done so when applied to by their native officer.

Many murmured their disapprobation, while a large powerful man, a trooper, stepping out of the ranks, spoke in a loud voice and said: "Of what fault has 'Rejeb' (for that was the prisoner's name) been guilty? He fired a pistol in the town, but hurt no one

by it. Is that a crime? It may be according to English ideas, but not according to Albanian ones. Go," he said, addressing me, "into Albania, 'tis but one day's journey, and see what the customs are there. Every one fires his pistol when he will, and where he will. We did not enter the English service to be made children of, and only discharge our arms when we get leave to do so. No," he continued, "Albanians cannot be so treated, and I for one object to Rejeb being flogged."

Many applauded the speaker, and I at once saw what a difficult job I had before me. I had, however, thought the matter over previously, and was prepared. I knew the room in which the prisoner was confined, and without answering the mutinous trooper, I led the way up the wooden stairs that led to the balcony or passage fronting the men's rooms, and which I have before described. I was followed by the whole troop, as of course by my interpreter, the doctor, and Mahomet; and we proceeded along the passage to the prisoner's room, which was the end one. I then told the native officer to bring him out, which he did, and I managed that when he came into the balcony he should be between myself and the men of the troop, who were crowded up together at the end of the passage. They were all much excited, but I commanded silence, and then said that the language addressed to me down below by the tall trooper was mutinous, and I should not forget it; that I presumed

there were some who supported him in his ideas, but I was quite sure many did not. The events of that morning would show me who were my good soldiers, who my bad ones; and as I was determined to know the one from the other, I requested that all who did not intend to oppose me in carrying out my orders would cross over to where I stood, for that those who remained where they then were I should regard as my enemies.

This had the effect of bringing over to my side a great number at once; all the sergeants and corporals came, for they knew their future chance of promotion if they did not do so was gone, and many others followed their example. I waited to give them all time, and when I saw that the movement had entirely ceased, and that I had about half around me, I spoke again, and asked if all the remainder quite understood the position they placed themselves in, and I sent for a paper and pencil to take down their names. While this was being brought, many others, not liking to figure in this list, crossed over to me, and thus when the paper came there were not more than seven left on the opposing side. I singled out one man by name, and told him unless he crossed over I should write him down; he hesitated a moment, and then in a sulky manner came to me. I did the same with another, eventually with the same result; and he was followed by three more, who came without waiting to be asked, so that at last none remained but the tall

trooper and one other, who turned out to be his brother. They *would* not move, and I wrote down their names; but no sooner had I done so than they also crossed, thinking, I presume, that they could oppose me just as well on one side as the other.

I had, however, attained my object of getting all the troop together facing the end of the passage, and I then at once, accompanied by the doctor, my interpreter, and Mahomet, crossed over to the other side, where I was of course alone with those three, and with the end wall of the passage at my back, so that no one could approach from behind. The prisoner remained still in the centre, between myself and my men, as the only alteration of position effected was that the troopers and I had changed places.

I was not deceived by the Bashis having done as I ordered. I knew they were just as much opposed to the flogging taking place as ever, and that the difficulty was only so far got over that I was in as good a local position as I could possibly desire.

The reader will kindly remember, that, as stated before, the balcony or passage was but eight or ten feet broad; this confined space only allowed the men forming the front rank of the crowd to be five or six in number, or, in other words, they could not, if they wished it, advance more than that number at a time.

I conceive they thought obedience having been shown by all in the matter of changing sides, I should now relent and forgive the prisoner as they desired;

but I knew well the material I had to deal with, and determined to read them a lesson which would save me much trouble and annoyance hereafter.

They were somewhat astonished, therefore, when I said, "After what has passed, I cannot suppose that any of you still think of opposing me, and I am now therefore about to flog Rejeb; at the same time, as I think it possible there may be some amongst you who might forget the tacit agreement just entered into, I shall stand over the man while he is flogged with my pistol; and, so help me God, the first of you who moves forward but one step, or puts his hand to his weapons, I will shoot like a dog. You know this," I said, taking the pistol from Mahomet (who at a sign from me had taken it out of his sash), "it has five charges, and many of you saw the other day how quickly I put the five balls into a melon I fired at; judge then if I shall miss the man who steps forward. Mahomet has the fellow pistol, and knows how to use it; so now let me see who dares to dispute my authority!"

I cocked my pistol and pointed it at the throng. Mahomet did the same, my interpreter also, for he had brought a small one in his pocket; and I then called over the Yuzbashee, for I knew he would not, from his position, play me false; and their native chief being by my side, was so far a security, that the Bashis would not like to fire at me for fear of hitting him.

The Yuzbashee, at my order, sent for two of the stablemen. When they came I made them throw down

the prisoner, and he there and then received at their hands the punishment I had awarded — viz., fifty lashes.

I stood over him the whole time, my pistol always pointed at the crowd before me, and jealously watching every movement. Not a man moved forward, not one touched his arms, but they were much excited during its continuance, and looked on with lowering brows.

When the punishment was concluded, I directed the doctor to take charge of the prisoner, who, from the severity of the punishment received, required his attendance, and at once passed, with the Yuzbashee, through the throng to his room, where over a cup of coffee and a chibouque we discussed the affair.

The native officer expressed his astonishment at the men having been thus overcome. "It only shows," he said, "what firmness will do. I would not have believed the scene of to-day had I not witnessed it. I am convinced the men will like you all the better for it."

The doctor soon returned, and I left the Han. In the course of the day the tall trooper who had opposed me came and most submissively begged my pardon for what he had done. I thought it a case in which I might be lenient, and frankly forgave him,—to tell the truth, I was not a little pleased with the events of the morning, and ready to forgive anything. I knew I had gained a great victory, and that the effect thereof would remain as long as I stopped in the force.

I had gone to the Han doubtful of the result, and fully alive to the magnitude of the contest I had undertaken. I left it, having carried out my purpose in the most triumphant manner, and well aware how much I had smoothed all future difficulties thereby.

CHAPTER XII.

A NIGHT SCENE.

THE story related in the last chapter was told to the British and French Consuls by the Italian doctor, and I was heartily congratulated by both that same day. Mr. H—— sent for the Yuzbashee and asked him what the state of feeling in the troop was? "Astonishment at what has been done, but an increased respect for our Meer Aly (commandant)," was the answer.

Mr. H—— conversed with him further on the subject, and as the Consul both spoke and understood Turkish well, he learnt exactly all he wished to learn in the matter.

I had begun to speak Turkish a little by this time, but both in speaking and listening I required the constant use of an interpreter; the reader must not therefore suppose that the conversations related were carried on without one. When I knew what the Turkish of anything I had to say was, I said it; when not, I told it in French to my interpreter, who

translated it. He (the interpreter) did not know English, but it was about the only language he did *not* speak; he knew more or less all European and many eastern ones. This universal knowledge of foreign tongues struck me much during my residence in Turkey; in England take twenty children of ten or eleven years, and you will not find more than one who speaks any modern language besides the parent one; in Turkey, among the Christian inhabitants, you will not, on the other hand, out of the same number, find three who do not speak at least two besides their mother-tongue, while by far the greater part speak three or four. I remember that later I knew the daughter of an English Consul at another consular post in Turkey—her father was an Englishman, her mother a Greek—to her father she spoke in English, to her mother in French, and besides those two languages, which she spoke as well as any native, and which were the only ones of which I could judge, she also knew, and knew well, I was told, Italian, Spanish, Greek, German, and Turkish, thus making in all seven languages which this young girl, for she was not above fifteen years old, spoke fluently.

The reason of all this is, of course, the multiplicity of tongues in the East; there is no one general language in the Levant, or indeed in Turkey, and children are accustomed, therefore, at the age when new and abstract ideas fix themselves most readily in the memory, to hear this diversity of dialects, and they

necessarily, without exertion, retain much of what they hear.

I sat up very late on the night of the day the flogging scene had taken place, writing home an account thereof; it is, indeed, from the letter then indited that many of the details in the last chapter are furnished. It was past midnight and still I sat much absorbed in relating the scenes so fresh in my memory; my servants had all gone to bed, and feeling somewhat cold, I looked up to find the fire in the stove had burnt out, and that my lamp would apparently soon follow its example. I yawned as I made the discovery, shut up my writing-book, and relighting the stump of the cigar I had been smoking, took off my coat (for I had been writing in my bedroom) preparatory to turning in.

I started as I did so, for through the stillness which reigns at night in an eastern city I heard at a distance the clatter of many hoofs on the roughly paved streets, which on a nearer approach resolved itself into the unmistakeable sound of a large body of horse advancing at full speed.

What could this be? There were no other cavalry in the town but mine (the Turkish horse were outside the city in another direction); and what could be their motive at that late hour? Were they rendered desperate by the scenes of that morning,—now deserting *en masse*—and yet why then should they come that route, which was their longest way out of the town? Could it be possible (and my thoughts reverted to the scenes

of home which my letter had invoked) that they were determined to gratify their revenge on the Giaour who had that day conquered them, and that they would visit me, *en passant,* before they fled to the mountainous wilds of Albania ?

All these thoughts crossed my mind with the speed of lightning. Shortly as they are transferred from the page to the reader's understanding, they took not a tenth part of the time to pass through my brain during those eventful moments. I say moments, for truly it was no more, so quickly came the advancing cavalcade. Had I been able to conceive any solution but the one I had devised, for the event, I should I think have given it credence ; but I could think of *nothing* which should call forth these wild Bashi-Bazouks at that hour, when the city was wrapped in sleep, and when, according to all eastern ideas, any call for immediate action, be it ever so momentous, would be put off till the morrow. I say I should have credited any other solution could I have thought of one, for I remembered the details of the Yuzbashee's conversation with the Consul, and found it difficult to believe his anticipations of the effect my conduct had produced, were so illusory.

All further thought, however, was cut short by the stoppage of the cavalry in front of my gate, and the repeated thundering blows immediately after dealt on the large court-yard door by the riders. As I listened for one moment to their vehemence, and to the excited murmur of many voices which mixed with the sound,

my heart sank within me at what I thought my critical position; to be thus butchered at night and by such numbers that no resistance would avail me, was a cruel result, and finale to my military career: and it was not without a great struggle I forced myself to face the danger, and called to my aid my reasoning powers to aid me in the sad emergency.

At all events I will sell my life dearly, I thought, as with all haste I took my pistol from its case and my double rifle from its rack. "Ah, knock away, the door will stand more than that—Mahomet, Mahomet, come up here quickly." He was I knew the only person in the house beside myself (my servants slept in outhouses), but he was in bed and my call did not awake him. I rushed down the stairs to his room, dashed open the door, and was quickly standing by his rude bed and shaking him.

"Awake, awake," I called out in Hindostanee; "there's work for you, and of the kind you like." You'll have your fill now, I thought to myself, as I shook the heavy sleeper.

He started up at last: his first movement was to thrust one hand under the mattress he lay on and pull out his pistol, while with the other he grasped my arm with the strength of a vice.

"It's I, Mahomet, it's I! get up quick."

"Ah, Sahib! what's the matter? You have your pistol, what's that for?" and he jumped out of bed, partly dressed as he was, in a moment.

"Listen! do you hear that?" I replied, as more powerful blows were dealt on the court-door, mingled with shouts from those who demanded admittance.

"Yes; what is it?—what can they want at such an hour? tell me quick!" he continued; "we have not much time."

I told him who they were, and that I knew nothing but feared much.

"May the chastity of their mothers be defiled, and their sisters' offspring call them father!" he added, in the peculiar manner he spoke when excited. "Never mind, we can defy them all yet. Ah! there goes the door," as with repeated blows it at last burst open, and we heard men and horses pour into the court-yard. "To the top of the stairs, Sahib; quickly, they cannot come up more than two at a time, and we 've numberless cartridges for both pistols and rifle."

As we ascended knocks were dealt on the hall-door, and amongst many voices I recognised that of the Yuzbashee; this was the first thing that made me doubt their visit being hostile, and returning, I asked, without undoing the door, what was the matter.

"Two men have deserted,—Rejeb, who was flogged, and his brother; and I have brought a party to pursue them," was the answer the Yuzbashee gave.

Here then the mystery was solved. I at once flung open the door, and thought as I did so I had perhaps hastily attributed an evil motive to the crowd below.

I have often thought over the matter since, and perhaps felt a little ashamed of my ready apprehensions: the only excuse I have ever been able to give, even to myself, was, that the time it occurred, (I mean in the middle of the night,) and the events preceding it that day, to a certain extent justified my apprehensions. Besides which, I conceive people are more apt to attribute to a disastrous cause any sudden event which occurs at night and in solitude, than in the broad and busy day; at all events, the truth is as I have stated it above, and the frankness of the confession will not, I trust, injure me in the reader's estimation.

As the door was thrown open, I thought the scene that met my gaze was peculiar. The stone yard was full of armed troopers, some with great coats on, some blazing in all the finery of their gaudy uniform, horses pawing the ground, as if in consciousness that their powers of speed would soon be called into play, dismounted men adjusting their saddles; all this thrown out in vivid colouring by the strong and lurid light of at least a dozen torches borne by the men themselves, formed a picture which I would I could transfer to these pages.

Conversation between the Yuzbashee and myself was slow. I had no interpreter but Mahomet, and as I have said before, or ought to have said, he did not speak Turkish well; however he helped me sometimes when I was at a loss for a word, and between us we managed to understand what had occurred.

The deserters had not, it seems, started more than half an hour, but their horses were good, and it would be no easy job to catch them; they might also have gone any of four routes, no one knew which. The party the Yuzbashee had brought, some thirty men, professed their willingness, nay their anxiety, to capture them; and it did not take long to divide them into four bodies, and send them successively along the different roads with orders to catch the deserters, *coûte qui coûte*, I offering a reward of two sovereigns to the first man who should take either.

As they galloped out of the court-yard Mahomet and I returned into the house; he looked up at the stairs as we entered, and said with a sigh, "We should have made a good fight from the top, that's certain; but, perhaps,—it's better as it is."

CHAPTER XIII.

CROSS COUNTRY, AND A NARROW ESCAPE.

THREE days brought back all four parties, who had started in pursuit of the deserters, but no success had attended their efforts.

I took such measures as I could, with the aid of the English Consul, and hoped to recover them eventually, their homes being known. It was not that I cared much about the loss of these two, but I was fearful of the result inducing others to do the same thing, should the runaways not be apprehended. As I shall not revert to this matter again, I may here state that I caught both men a month later, brought them back to Monastir, and punished them.

I found, as I had expected, the result of my moral victory over the troop most beneficial, and I quickly began to fashion them into soldiers. I wrote to head-quarters, asking for leave to enlist more men, which permission was accorded to me, though but for a limited number, the full complement of the force being nearly made up.

I had parades nearly daily, and found my Bashis most willing and ready to learn. I endeavoured to make the exercise as amusing to them as possible, teaching them the object of the different movements, and praising them highly when they did well. I was also careful not to fatigue them with unnecessary detail, for I kept constantly before me the fact that they were intended for irregular light skirmishing cavalry, and that the nicety of instruction applicable to regulars would be misplaced with them. At the same time, I began at the beginning, and went regularly step by step, so that the men understood the leading principles of drill, by threes, by fours, and sections, before I attempted to teach them more extended movements.

I am happy to say that, when I arrived with my troop at Shumla in April 1856, and was directed to exercise them before General Smith, who commanded the force, he expressed his approval of their capabilities in laudatory terms, and also paid me a high eulogy on the state of discipline in which he found them.

Though my military duties gave me plenty to do at Monastir, I found time to amuse myself by divers shooting-excursions into the surrounding country with one or both of the Consuls. We had heard there were bears in the neighbourhood, and, indeed, we had positive proof of the fact, as every now and then their skins were brought in for sale. In these excursions I used often to take a part of my troop with me. The Albanians are passionately fond of any kind of hunting,

and nothing gave them so much pleasure as when I took them all in a body to beat any mountain or forest where report said a grisly bear had his home. If the ground was at all possible for horses (and the small Albanian nags will go anywhere), they would follow me on horseback; and he must, indeed, have been a bold bear who would not condescend to move from his lair when the whole of these wild Bashi-Bazouks came down a hill in one long line, shrieking in the most unearthly manner, and firing their pistols at every hare or bird which crossed their path.

At other times we would seek for Bruin in his den, and search closely all the thick forest which surrounded it. My men then accompanied me on foot, wading often up to their middles in snow, and laughing heartily at any mishap which occurred to any of the party on the slippery slopes we traversed.

Though we saw and killed other game in these expeditions, we never had the luck to find a bear. Our want of success disappointed me, for I longed to see my Bashi-Bazouks in a hand-to-hand encounter with a shaggy monster,—in short, a regular stand-up fight with Bruin, like some I have witnessed and acted in myself during my sojourn of ten years in India.

There was very good coursing around Monastir; and the English Consul having greyhounds, we occasionally followed the hares over the splendid grassy downs lying on one side of the city. I enjoyed it much, as did also such of my men as I allowed to accompany

me. But the greatest fun of all was our cross-country rides. I had told them, that as light cavalry, they should be able to get over any ordinary obstacle, and I used to lead the way on my black charger "Night," jumping the stone walls, banks, hedges and ditches, around Monastir.

The Bashis were pleased thereat. There was danger and excitement in it, and that was enough for them. I laughed more, I think, during some of these gallops than ever I did before or since. To see ten, fifteen, or twenty of them riding at a ditch and bank, all following each other in one long line—some, though few, jumping it, others, in vain, attempting to bring their horses near it, many falling into the ditch, and consequently falling off their steeds,—neither biped nor quadruped seeming to care if three or four more riders and their horses tumbled upon them while lying at full length in the trench!

They certainly never essayed jumping on horseback before, and were much astonished at some of the results which followed the attempt; as for instance, when a light and graceful rider, putting his horse full speed at a stone wall which he had just seen me clear, was, in consequence of the steed stopping short, just when he should have jumped, shot over the quadruped's head to the other side; the pistol, which he not unfrequently held in his hand, to brandish while he made the attempt, being unwittingly discharged, while the would-be Meltonian was flying through the air! His failure

would not deter others; they would go at it by threes and fours, until the whole field was covered with loose horses, and a corresponding number of human forms were either lying on the ground, bestriding the wall, or chasing the truant steeds.

I used to indulge in this jumping exercise as a relief to the monotony of regular parades, and I found it answered my purpose in more than one way; the men were pleased at my joining in their sport; it caused them also to respect my prowess as a horseman; for having hunted with some of the first packs in England, and seen many a hard day's "pig-sticking" in India, I could get across the country and the fences very much better than any of them. They were highly gratified, also, when I mounted one of their refractory steeds, and forced him, *nolens volens*, over some opposing obstacle at which a dozen had tried him and failed. But, above all, it endeared me to them when they saw that at such times I was on the most familiar and intimate terms with all, and was as ready to smoke the pipe of, and chat with, the lowest trooper, as I was to give their Yuzbashee a cigar out of my case, and laugh with him over the numerous "spills" which we witnessed.

I had made my black horse "Night" a famous fencer. I bought him, if the reader recollects, at the Dardanelles, and had practised him almost daily since then across country. I won upon his back the Dardanelles steeplechase, in which run some of the best

English horses in the force, and for which in consequence no one thought he had a chance when he started. With such a steed under me, it was no wonder I could always show my men the way; and Mr. H—— the Consul, a splendid rider, and as fond of the fun as myself, used often to accompany me, on which occasion we would, in a spirit of emulation the one against the other, jump objects which it would have been useless to try the small Albanian horses at. Our feats on these occasions often called forth muttered "Mashallas" in an astonished tone from the delighted Bashi-Bazouks. The immediate consequences of this cross-country exercise, when I began it, were some broken knees and a few sprained back sinews among the horses, with divers black eyes or swollen features amongst the men; the ultimate result was that the troop I took to Shumla could certainly have beaten any Russian Cossacks across country, and had the power, which I think has always been much neglected in light cavalry, of passing any ordinary obstacle they might encounter.

I was walking one day in the Bazaar at Monastir with Mahomet, who had become much attached to me, and who followed in silence behind. We were neither of us armed. He had been oiling and cleaning his pistol before he came out, and I did not then often carry mine. We were walking along and thinking of anything rather than fighting, when I felt a man brush most rudely by me, almost striking me with his

shoulders as he did so. I turned, and as he passed a-head I saw it was a tall Turk in uniform and armed, inasmuch as a very curved scimitar hung by his side.

He in no way apologised for the extreme rudeness of which he had been guilty, so I increased my pace, and when at his side, placed my hand on his arm, saying in my bad Turkish, "What did you do that for?" He turned and confronted me, but instead of answering my query drew his sword, saying something I could not understand, though I thought I distinguished the one word, "Giaour" (infidel). At the same time he stepped back, and before I could guess what he meditated, lifted the blade over his head and made a determined cut at me. I had but just time to put up my left arm to receive the blow, while at the same moment, with my right hand, I seized his wrist as it descended, and arrested the force of the stroke. I could not do so altogether, however, for the blade, sharp as any razor, fell (though with little more than its own weight), cutting through a thick great-coat, besides an inner cotton-padded jacket, and laying my arm open nearly to the bone.

I did not know at the moment I was wounded, for I felt no pain, and I stretched out my right hand to seize the sword; but the Turk stepped quickly on the other side of a pile of loose bricks, and thus frustrated my intention; at the same moment he relifted his sabre and dealt a furious cut at my head, which, from what I afterwards saw of the sword, would I

think have finished my career in this world had it taken effect.

It did not do so, for at that critical moment he was seized by the throat from behind, and pulled violently backward, so that the point of the scimitar passed as it descended in front of my face, but did not reach me.

I knew without looking, it was Mahomet who had so opportunely assisted me; and no fiend could wear a more frightful aspect than he did, when, looking up, I saw him. His long, lean, nervous fingers encircled the throat of my opponent, which he squeezed with a force that made the eyes of the Turk appear as if they would start from their sockets, and the face assume that painful bluish-red appearance consequent on strangulation. Mahomet's countenance was a picture in itself: the passions of extreme hate and gratified revenge could be plainly read therein; as, with extended lips, closely set teeth, and eyes that told in plain words the savage nature of the man, he seemed to lend the force of every muscle he could command to accomplish his deadly purpose, which I firmly believe was to have killed his victim where he stood.

I advanced, and, seizing Mahomet's wrist, commanded him to desist, but he seemed in no way to hear me, for his fingers relaxed not their deadly grip. By this time a crowd had collected around, and a third actor appeared on the scene, in the shape of a companion or friend of the Turk, who coming up unperceived hit Mahomet over the head with a rough

pole of some scaffolding hard by, while some one else, but who I never knew, broke on my scalp a large globular earthenware pot, in which lime had been placed, and rather for a moment or two injured my eyesight thereby.

When I recovered my perceptions, Mahomet was on the ground bleeding from the mouth, the Turk was walking hurriedly away, and the crowd was staring at us; the two last aggressors had either disappeared, or, having mingled with the throng, could not be distinguished.

Mahomet was quickly on his feet, and, like a baffled tiger, staring about for his prey. No sooner did he see the Turk going down the street, than he would have started in pursuit, had I not detained him. He looked to see who it was that frustrated him in his purpose, and his respect for me could scarcely overcome his anger.

"Chourdo, chourdo, Sahib" (loose me, loose me, Sir), he exclaimed, as he used even force to free himself, and I let him go. I scarcely knew why I had detained him, for I had no intention the Turk should escape; but my intellects were still somewhat confused in consequence of the lime-pot which had been broken over my head.

My Affghan darted after the Turk, while I followed and came up with them both just as the former had caught the latter close to a guard-house, and, throwing himself upon him, had brought him to the ground.

The Turkish soldiers on duty there, who had not seen the former part of the fray, and now saw what appeared an unprovoked assault by Mahomet, rushed to the assistance of their countryman, and fell on my brave follower, beating him with the butt-end of their muskets. I interposed as well as I could, and should have stopped their attack, had it not been that each time Mahomet was free he renewed the fight with all the ferocity of a tiger, evidently caring nothing for the consequences, so long as he indulged his master-passion. It was truly a splendid sight to see the real and noble courage, however misplaced, of this Affghan; as, utterly regardless of the danger he ran from the bayonets of the Turkish soldiers, or the scimitar of our old enemy, he, with clothes torn, swollen features, and a blood-stained face, cast about him at each pause for a new antagonist!

The unequal contest could not last long; he was overpowered by numbers, and his arms tied with ropes behind. This the Turkish soldiers did in spite of my remonstrances, though, to tell the truth, I was not sorry that he should be forcibly prevented for a time from renewing the contest. I was the more satisfied, as at my command they took the Turk also prisoner; and so I accompanied both him and Mahomet into the guard-house.

My interpreter had in the mean time arrived; and on getting Mahomet to promise me he would remain quiet, unless himself attacked, I, with the said inter-

preter's help, induced the Turkish soldiers, who seemed doubtful how far they ought to obey me, to release him. When free, he sat down on the steps of the guard-house, and hoped, I am certain, some one, by proving the first aggressor, would release him from the state of quietude his promise to me bound him to maintain.

At this period, the Turk who had wounded me was inside the hall of the building. Mahomet, much hurt, was sitting on the steps of the portico. I was standing by his side, with the blood from my wound running down my arm, and the whole guard of Turkish soldiers were in front near the gate.

Suddenly a great cry was raised outside, which I recognised as the voices of my Albanian cavalry, and, to my astonishment, I saw at least forty of them approaching on foot up the street. It appeared that one of their number had witnessed a portion of the quarrel, saw I was wounded, and had run off to the Han with an exaggerated account of the danger I was in.

The Yuzbashee had quickly assembled all the men who were in at the time, and they now appeared to give me any assistance I might require.

When they saw the blood dripping from my fingers, they got very much excited, and offered, in spite of the guard (who had fixed bayonets, and stood ready to dispute their entrance into the building), to drag out the man who had wounded me, and there and

then take revenge for the indignity offered to their leader.

I told them they must remain quiet, for the English Consul, whom I had sent for, would arrive shortly, and the Turk should then be punished in a regular manner.

This quiet way of concluding the business did not satisfy these ardent champions, and it was not without some trouble and threats of my displeasure if they disobeyed me, that I kept them from committing some open act of violence.

Mr. H——, the Consul, shortly arrived, and on hearing from me the whole tale directed the Turk to be bound, and taken by some of the regular Turkish guard to the Pasha's house. He then asked me to accompany him there, as he was determined to bring the matter forward at once.

We went to the palace, followed by the whole of my Albanians, who seemed to think I was not safe without them. After some delay we were admitted into the Pasha's presence. It was not the first time I had seen him, and he received me very cordially. The preliminaries of pipes and coffee having been gone through, the English Consul detailed the whole affair. The account given being confirmed by my evidence and Mahomet's, the Pasha declared himself quite satisfied, and turning to me said he placed the fate of the prisoner entirely in my hands, and that I could do with him as I would.

I answered his Excellency, saying, that as the attack of the Turk upon me was most unprovoked, I thought he ought to be severely punished for it; and that, as the offence was committed in the public bazaar, the retribution ought to take place on the same spot. I demanded, therefore, that he should receive two hundred lashes in the market-place of the town, within one hour of that time.

The Pasha assented to my request, expressing his astonishment at the mildness of the punishment I adjudged; and the prisoner was at once by his order taken to a spot near where he had wounded me, and there, in presence of the English Consul, myself, and all my Bashi-Bazouks, received his flogging.

I did not allow the full number of lashes to be given, for when he had received eighty I thought he had been punished sufficiently; and though some of the town people blamed me for my leniency, the time he was in hospital from the effect of the corporal punishment showed I had done well.

The English Consul sent a report of the case to Lord Stratford, and three weeks later our Ambassador ordered the prisoner to be sent under guard to Constantinople, approving at the same time of the prompt measures Mr. H—— had adopted. I was fearful the prisoner had been called to the Embassy with a view to further punishment; and as the poor man had already been nearly ruined by the pecuniary loss he had sustained by his detention, and had received severe

bodily punishment, I begged of Mr. H——, when he wrote, to place these facts before our Ambassador. I believe he did so; but what became of the Turk, who shortly after was sent off to the capital under a strong escort, I never heard: but trust on arrival he was liberated, as, considering the lesson he had received, it is not probable I think he would wantonly attack another "Giaour."

CHAPTER XIV.

DAMASCUS BLADE—WEDDING FIGHTS—AND ADIEU MONASTIR.

My wound healed quickly. It was well cared for and the cut having been effected by a peculiarly sharp instrument, the edges of the incision were readily brought together. Three weeks after its occurrence I had quite recovered from its effects.

It appeared as if the affair with the Turk (who, I forgot to mention, turned out to be a native officer on leave, and belonging to some irregular Turkish regiment) was not to finish with his punishment, for two days after its occurrence, my friend Mr. H—— came to me, and said he had been advised that there was a body of compatriots of the said Turk in the town, and that they had met together since the event, and swore to be revenged on me for the disgrace put on the whole of their clan by the corporal punishment in a public place of one who it seems held a high rank amongst them.

The Consul therefore begged I would be very careful not to go out unattended, and advised my doubling the

guard of Bashi-Bazouks I had at my house. I took these precautions, and nothing could be more marked than the care and anxiety evinced by all my soldiers for my welfare. They, too, had heard from some other source what the Consul had told me; and the precautions they adopted, as, for instance, waiting outside my gate by twenty at a time to accompany me when I should go out, and augmenting the guard at my house by volunteers to triple its original number, became positively irksome. I did not like to forbid their doing all this, for it clearly gratified them; but I was very glad when, nothing occurring to justify any apprehension, things gradually fell into their ordinary train.

I had the sword of the Turk who had wounded me in my possession. I claimed it when we all went before the Pasha, on the plea that as he had put it to so bad a use, he ought not to retain it; and partly because an idea is prevalent in Turkey that, "until possessed of your foe's weapon, more especially the weapon that has wounded you, victory is not complete:" and I did not wish my Bashi-Bazouks to think I had failed in this point.

It was a very splendid sabre, or rather scimitar, made at Damascus; the blade, of which the temper was excellent, would bear as sharp an edge as a razor. The handle was inlaid with ornamental stones (I do not think they were precious ones), and the scabbard was profusely covered with silver. According to the

opinion expressed by sword connoisseurs at Monastir it was worth 3500 piastres, or about 30*l.*, and it seemed to me I could not do better than give it to Mahomet, who so richly deserved it for his conduct on that day. My intention was however frustrated by the Consul, who, when I consulted him on the subject, advised me to return the sword to the Pasha, as from its great value, if I kept it, or gave it away, the Turks would assuredly think I had done so from interested motives.

I did as he recommended; but as I was *quite* determined it should never enter the Turkish officer's possession again in a perfect state, I snapped the blade in two pieces before doing so—a difficult job enough, owing to the excellence of the steel.

I attended one or two weddings of the Christian inhabitants about this time. Their greatest peculiarity consisted in all the guests, including the bride and bridegroom, assembling together in a large room after the ceremony, and sitting on chairs ranged round the walls, smoking and staring at each other; after a time, large trays with sugar-plums or bonbons were brought in, and every man filled his pockets, and every lady her lap, therewith; the servants then retired, and a war of sweetmeats commenced, each person flinging his bonbons at somebody else. The ladies in no way escaped, though, generally speaking, when the missiles were directed against them, it was done gently; if, however, any Greek had a spite

against any woman or girl of the party, he did not let the opportunity slip, and pelted her most unmercifully.

Petty animosities which had arisen on other subjects between some of the men, were then and there adjusted by sugar-plum duels; each antagonist would load himself with the sugary bullets, and the fight would commence (minor encounters being suspended during its continuance), first at some distance apart, but gradually the combatants would approach, until they had no more than space to hurl their missiles with force; then commenced the real fury of the contest,—they would dash whole handfuls in each other's face, with all the power they could command, and as the sugar-plums were generally large, often as big as a plum, it truly was no joke. This hand-to-hand encounter would continue, often with real rage and intention to injure on either side, until one of the sugar-plum knights cried "*Peccavi*," or else had exhausted all his ammunition; this last position, however, was no reason for a cessation of hostilities on the part of his antagonist, the unhappy bonbon-less champion being then pursued by his adversary, who kept up the sugar-storm until *his* pockets were also empty.

This was all very good fun, but I once or twice saw it carried too far; and 'tis no less strange than true, that among the Christian population, at least in Western Turkey, it is not necessary to inquire if any wedding has recently taken place, the swollen features of the

greater part of the society indicating if one, in sporting parlance, "has lately come off!"

At all these weddings, another curious custom exists of the bride, after the ceremony and before the fight,—kissing the hands of all those whom she respects, or wishes in future to know intimately. In both cases I was one of the favoured few, and I know not if I transgressed the laws of decorum, or amazed the bridegroom thereby, but I at once repaid the favour by also kissing the hand before me, though, to tell the truth, I would much rather have returned the salute with interest by transferring it to the face, as the brides on both occasions were very pretty.

The greater part of the winter had now passed, and the season for active warlike operations in the field would soon be at hand. There was some talk of peace, 'tis true, at Monastir, but no one believed in its possibility, much less probability. I had received orders from Shumla to join head-quarters as soon as the weather would permit, and about this time another duty, disagreeable enough in some respects, devolved upon me.

This was no less than catching all the deserters who had either at the Dardanelles, on the march, or at Shumla, deserted from the force; and whose homes being either in Albania or around Monastir, would, it was supposed, be found there.

It was very wise of General Smith, who commanded at Shumla, to determine, as he did, to read the soldiers

of the Osmanli Irregular Cavalry (the name which supplanted that of "Beatson's Horse") a severe lesson on the subject of desertion, and show them it could not be practised with impunity. Hitherto no active steps had been taken to apprehend deserters, and on receiving instructions from Shumla on the subject, I set about the work with a will. I shall not enter into lengthy details, or particularise the steps followed out, (for my book has already swelled to a size I did not anticipate, and I must reserve a few pages for Shumla and the final scenes of the force,) suffice it then to state, that with the aid of Mr. H——, the Consul, and the hearty co-operation of my own men (with whom I could now do anything), I succeeded in capturing forty-eight deserters, and recovering many of the horses they had stolen, and which I sold on account of the English government. The necessary punishment was followed out by me at Monastir; for much as I disliked this part of the duty, I was fully alive to its necessity. I then sent a list to Shumla with the name and corps of every man captured, and the details of his punishment, which, as it comprised besides flogging, imprisonment of one, two or three months in the Turkish jail, would, I felt sure, when read at the head of every regiment in the force, deter others from following the example set them.

In concluding the account of my short career at Monastir, I would observe that whatever *I did* accomplish there, I accomplished quite alone, for I had no

English officers or subordinates of any kind to assist me, and was in my own person Commandant, Adjutant, Quartermaster, Commissariat Officer, Veterinary Surgeon, and clerk to the troop; and that when on the day I left it with my men in high health and spirits, feeling as *I did* feel, that I could now call them soldiers,—when on that occasion I was accompanied out of the town by the Consuls and all the leading inhabitants of Monastir, besides a whole regiment of Turkish cavalry, which served as my escort; and when at parting that day with all these kind friends, I saw numerous sorrowful faces, and many a fervent "God bless you!" both from Turk and Christian, was showered on my head, I felt, and felt with gratitude to all around me, that my time there had not been thrown away.

CHAPTER XV.

MARCH TO SHUMLA.

I LEFT Monastir on the 6th of April, and arrived at Shumla on the 28th of the same month; I was thus twenty-three days on the road, and as I halted four out of that time, I was in fact but nineteen days performing the journey.

If the reader will cast his eye on the map of Turkey, he will have some idea of the distance I traversed; he will see, in short, that Monastir is a very long way from Shumla, the former being in Western Turkey, on the confines of Macedonia and Albania, and about eighty miles in a direct line from the Gulf of Venice, while the latter is not more than half that distance from the Port of Varna and the Black Sea, and situated at nearly the eastern extremity of the long province of Bulgaria. In a direct line, the distance between the two places does not exceed three hundred and fifty miles; but the road, in order to avoid some of the high ranges of mountains, being very circuitous, the actual distance traversed in the journey from one

place to the other, is four hundred and eighty-five miles. As I have said before, I was but nineteen days marching this distance, which gives, on an average, between twenty-five and twenty-six miles a day.

When we consider that the whole troop, with the sick and the baggage—in short, with every thing they would have required on a campaign, performed that distance daily for nineteen days, with four days' halt added thereto, or, in other words, marched four hundred and eighty-five miles in twenty-three days, coming in at the end of that time with both men and horses in good condition, it will give an idea of what great use this Bashi-Bazouk force would have been, had the war continued; for I do not think any cavalry officer will dispute my assertion when I state that the feat my men then performed, could not be accomplished by any body of troops, whether heavy or light cavalry, in the Queen's army.

I would wish it to be clearly understood, that I take no credit to myself for the rapidity, of what must be called, a long forced march from Monastir to Shumla. I had really but little to do with it. I was told to come as fast as possible, and I did so; as I found the horses and men could stand the distance named daily, *ergo*, we marched it; could the horses have marched forty instead of twenty-six miles *per diem*, I should have traversed the country at the former rate. Any praise, therefore, that is due in the matter belongs to the tough and hardy little Albanian horses and

their untirable riders, certainly not to myself. Nearly the same rate of marching was accomplished by other regiments when shortly after they went home for disbandment; and there is no doubt that, had the war continued, and any urgent necessity arisen for rapid movement, the whole force of Bashi-Bazouks could have traversed the same distance that I then marched in twenty-three days, during three-fourths of the time.

From the advantage alone which this power of endurance and rapidity of movement gave, the Bashi-Bazouk force would, I consider, have well repaid the Government of England for all the expense of its construction.

I lost two men by desertion, between Monastir and Shumla: one of them was the tall trooper who spoke in such a mutinous manner on the occasion of the flogging which Rejeb received in the Han—'tis true he had never since that time attempted to question any order I gave, but he was a sulky, morose creature, and I was not much surprised at his deserting; the other was a friend of his, whom I suppose he persuaded to go with him. They managed the affair cleverly enough, doing it at a time when they knew I should not miss them for some hours, and when pursuit was in consequence useless; for they were aware I had told the whole troop ere we left Monastir, that any man who deserted on the road, I should myself pursue, and that *if I caught him in the act*, I would assuredly

shoot him. They knew from experience I did not speak in vain, and they believed me.

I took a few precautions, after these desertions, to prevent any more; but I believe it was quite unnecessary—the whole troop were as much enraged with the two absentees as I was; and had any other man attempted the same thing, I have reason to think he would have been shot by, probably, the first of his fellow-troopers he met, who was aware of his intention. At all events, no further similar attempts were made.

The route from Monastir to Shumla traverses the two provinces of Macedonia and Bulgaria, and besides several low ranges of mountains, also passes the Balkan Range between the towns of Sofra and Soomonjee. But three Englishmen, they said, had traversed this line of country before I did so. The route passes through the very centre of Turkey, and is quite out of the track that any travellers, for either pleasure or gain, would take.

I have carried the reader now with me over a thousand miles of road, for I consider we have nearly arrived at Shumla, and yet I have not told him the principal point that would strike any traveller on the first day's journey in Turkey. This is really too bad; and I would that I could do away with the effect of my stupidity, by bringing in the omitted fact at the commencement of the tenth chapter, in which the march from the Dardanelles to Monastir is related; but the

truth is, all that part of the book has been printed some days, and I fear it would be difficult; so, however out of place it may be, I shall state it here.

Well, the fact—this important omitted fact is, that there are no roads whatever in Turkey. I have often spoken of roads, 'tis true; but whenever I did so, it was in the intended sense of tracks or routes. A road, to be a road in the legitimate sense of the word, must have been constructed by manual labour, to facilitate traffic thereon. Agreeably to this definition, I have not seen a single mile of road in all Turkey, for the tracks over which I always travelled (and one thousand seven hundred miles was the extent of my wandering by land) were nothing more than the marks made on the ground by numerous horsemen, and in some places, where the nature of the soil admits of it, by wheeled vehicles.

I remember that in passing through the large town of Sophia, *en route* from Monastir to Shumla, I saw his Excellency the Pasha of that district. He somewhat annoyed me by certain observations he had made in reference to England and the English, and I waited for an opportunity to retort. He commenced lauding the excellence of the internal administration of Turkey, to which I replied, that I knew nothing, or little, of it; but as far as one might judge, from a fact which we Englishmen always considered very indicative of the prosperity of a country, Turkey must indeed be in a woful condition.

"As how?" he asked.

"As regards roads—or rather the want of them," I replied. "There are four states in which a country may be, as regards the excellence of its roads, or internal lines of communication: the three first, *viz.*, a country with good roads, a country with indifferent roads, and a country with bad roads, I have already seen in different parts of the world, but I had to wait until I came to Turkey, to see the last of the four conditions, *viz.*, a country with no roads at all!"

The Pasha put down his chibouque; and, turning to the Turk nearest to him on the divan, said in an under tone, "This is the third Englishman who passed through Sophia, and the two others spoke as plainly as this one; it's not meant as rudeness, but Englishmen, they say, always tell the truth."

I felt, in spite of the disclaimer in his remark, that I *had* been rude; and I regretted the speech even though it was made in return for something he had said derogatory of England or the English.

I have not much more to say about my march from Monastir to Shumla. The reader must remember that when I commenced it, the news of the forthcoming peace had not penetrated into the centre of Turkey, nor, indeed, was it known at head-quarters, for at that time, *viz.* the end of March, 1856, the whole of the Bashi-Bazouk force was directed to hold itself in readiness to embark for Eupatoria, where, in the coming campaign, they were to have acted in conjunc-

tion with the British cavalry. This was certainly the highest testimony our force could have received of the opinion of its capabilities in high quarters.

On the supposed approaching departure of the Irregular cavalry for the Crimea, I received the following orders in a letter sent me from Shumla in March last.

"This force will in all probability have left Shumla by the time you arrive; you are therefore directed to keep the Officer Commanding well aware of your movements. On arrival at Shumla, should you find that the force has gone to the Crimea, you will at once continue your march on to Varna, sending forward in the first instance such notice to head-quarters, that shipping may be provided for your detachment."

I left Monastir, therefore, with the impression that I should see nothing of our main body till I arrived at Eupatoria, and that if active war had commenced sooner than was expected, I might have a little independent campaigning with my troop *before* I succeeded in joining our head-quarters. I was afraid, however, of missing the first part of the operations in the field, and so I pushed on as quick as I could: this fear and my orders on the subject were, in fact, the cause of the quick march I made; for though I heard rumours of the peace on the road, I could not, until quite the end of my journey, bring myself to believe in the great fact.

I entered Shumla from the west. It is perhaps

the best side on which you can do so to give you an idea of its vast military capabilities, or, rather, means of defence. Numerous field-works of great strength, and in commanding positions, are thrown out all round the town, while the city itself is surrounded with extensive and judicious fortifications. All this you can see from the very high ground where I stood, which is also fortified, and which overlooks Shumla from the side I came upon it. The sudden *coup d'œil* that presented itself as I reached the crest of the mountain, was very magnificent: immediately below was the city, one of great magnitude, with its almost countless domes, minarets, and mosques standing out in bold relief against the extensive and superb grassy plains by which Shumla is surrounded on three sides; on the other, that is, the side on which I stood, vineyards, orchards, and gardens covered the bases of the hills, and extended right up to the city gates. The effect of the scene was heightened by the highly-coloured and diversified uniforms of the numerous Bashi-Bazouks who were passing in and out of the city, or lounging about the barracks and stable; for the profuse gold braiding on their apparel shone in the bright mid-day sun, and made the bird's-eye view of the scene I have described peculiar and interesting.

As I wound down the mountain pass towards the town, my troop was observed by many; and all the Bashis who had originally come from Western Turkey,

and who expected friends, perhaps relatives, in the approaching column, jumped on their horses and came out to meet us. They came first by twos and threes, then by dozens, at a time, always approaching at full gallop, brandishing and oft firing their pistols as a welcome to the new comers. In such numbers had they collected round my troop, that when I had got to the bottom of the mountain, I was obliged to stop; and then the amount of kissing in the eastern fashion which took place during the five minutes' grace I allowed them, was truly astonishing.

After this we proceeded to the town, and having been directed to the house of General Smith, who commanded the force, I drew up the troop with open ranks in front of his gate.

I then went in to report myself to the Chief, but met him at the door. He expressed himself glad to see me, and spoke in high terms of his satisfaction at what I had done while away from head-quarters. He was pleased also with the general appearance of my troop, and surprised to find how few horses had suffered from the long and quick march just completed; for with that aptitude of detail which he possessed, he at once desired me to point out to him all the sore backs or other injuries which had occurred amongst the horses of the squadron.

At his invitation I went into his house and drank a glass of wine, while he directed tents to be pitched for my men in the plain near the town; and after accept-

ing his invitation to dine with him that evening, I left and took the troop to its destination.

I was curious to see what the state of the force was as compared to what it had been when I left it at the Dardanelles. An interval of very nearly six months had elapsed, and I looked anxiously for the result. I found a great change; in the first place, the relation of the officers towards each other was on a much better footing than it had ever been before, each man knew his own position, who was his senior, who his junior; besides, as the possibility of any sudden leap to high rank like what I described at the commencement of this volume had passed away for ever, there was, in consequence, less jealousy, less craving, and less suspicion than formerly, and, in lieu thereof, a feeling of kindness and good-will had sprung up, which in itself spoke volumes.

This very desirable change was owing partly to the said increased stability of position, and partly to the good influence exercised by our Chief and his second in command, General W——; for they had both, I conceive, seen the mischief that the state of things which existed at the Dardanelles might occasion, and had done their best to remedy this evil.

In this they were ably seconded by Brigadier H——, who commanded the Arnaout Brigade, and who, while he endeavoured to improve the discipline in his regiments, contrived to make himself most popular with all the officers below him.

I have spoken as yet of the English officers only. It remains to be seen what state of discipline the men were in. I had not been very many days at Shumla before I was aware that a great change for the better had taken place in them. The idea they formerly held that they could dictate their own terms was gone, never to return, and in place thereof they quite understood the meaning of obedience and the necessity of its practice.

I shall speak with great diffidence regarding the position of internal affairs at Shumla, for I had not the same means of information that I had at the Dardanelles; besides which, my stay at head-quarters, ere we all went different ways to disband the regiments, was not very long.

It must be remembered that the task General Smith took in hand, when he assumed command of the force, was no light one. Far easier for him would it have been had he occupied the place of Commandant from the commencement. He was placed over men who had been simply spoilt, and who, therefore, could ill brook the necessary severity that military law demands. General Smith had to steer between the rocks of Scylla and Charybdis, to avoid, on the one hand, perpetrating by repetition the wrong which had been done by excessive leniency and moral weakness, while, on the other, he was obliged to foresee and guard against the bad effects which stringent severity might have called forth in men whose first and only experience of a mili-

tary career had been some of the scenes described in the first part of this book.

No one, I think, can question the fact that General Smith acted wisely, and well, while in command of the Bashi-Bazouks; and whatever shortcomings were still observable at Shumla, whatever faults a resident eye-witness could still have detected in the organisation and the discipline of the corps, they were not of a nature to call forth any doubt as to its efficiency, and were attributable partly to the recency of its organisation, but still more to the effects of the unwise system in vogue at the Dardanelles.

There were many first-rate officers at Shumla who well understood the theory and practice of discipline, and who, had the force lasted, would, I am sure, have succeeded in fashioning it into one that would have done honour to its teachers. Our very excellent Assistant Adjutant-General and some of the commanding officers were men of this stamp, and I can only regret that the sudden peace cut short their exertions, just at the time that the fruits thereof were beginning to be apparent.

CHAPTER XVI.

AFFAIRS AT SHUMLA—DISBANDMENT.

THE different regiments were out on parade the day after I joined, and I was much gratified to see how well they moved. I saw them afterwards working in brigades; besides which, I was twice present when the whole force was out, and it was evident to me that the natives had begun to understand our system, and that many of the English officers had not been idle during the winter, for they had taught their regiments to do all ordinary cavalry movements with precision and exactitude;—when I make use of the word exactitude, I do not mean that they worked with the *nicety* of regular cavalry, but they understood what they did, and they did it well enough for the kind of duty on which they would be employed.

The improvement, to the extent which I observed it, had not been of very long duration; every day, during the last three months of its existence, improved the condition of the force in a multiplying ratio. There were reasons for this: first, the native officers and men latterly began to understand us, to respect our justice

and appreciate our liberality; secondly, the English officers, with some exceptions, began to speak Turkish, and could thus converse with their men without the aid of an interpreter, and no one who has not been placed in the position of dependence on an inferior, which the relations of master and interpreter necessitate, can at all conceive the extreme delight felt when such services are no longer absolutely necessary.

One or two cases still remained of officers who, without that knowledge of military matters essential thereto, held high positions, and they, of course, more or less retarded the advancement of the force. I must here relate a somewhat amusing scene that occurred on parade (after the corps had arrived at Shumla, but before I joined it there), and which, in some measure, bears out the above assertion.

It was a general parade day, and all or the greater part of the regiments were out at exercise, each under its own commandant, while the General (I am not sure which of them it was) superintended the whole. Seeing one of the Arab regiments careering over the plain at full gallop, but without any order whatever, inasmuch as they were in a confused crowd, the General, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, rode up near to where the movement was going on, and called out in a loud voice to the Commandant of the said Arabs, to ask what he, or rather his regiment, was doing.

"Charging in a cloud, sir," replied the Anglo-Arabian Chief, as he dashed by at full gallop.

"What does he say?" asked the General, of the officer at his side. "I could not hear."

"I will ask him again. I am not sure *I* heard right," responded the aide-de-camp.

The question was repeated, for though the crowd of Arabs pursued their mad career, their Commandant had pulled up.

"The General wishes to know what your regiment is doing, sir?" called out the aide-de-camp.

"Charging in a cloud," again replied the self-satisfied Commandant, who in no way guessed, I suppose, he was not *en règle.*

"Charging in what?" said the General to his officer once more.

"He says he's charging in a cloud, sir," was the reply, with a face in which suppressed laughter might be seen.

"Well, it's a new movement—at all events, I never heard of it before," said the General, laughing himself, as he turned away.

This story was told me by two officers at Shumla, who were themselves present; and I do not doubt its correctness.

A curious state of things existed for a day or two at Shumla, some time before I joined the head-quarters, but as happily the electric telegraph line was complete between that place and London, it was soon rectified.

General Smith, falling sick, went home, leaving General W——, who was his second in command, in charge of the force. Brigadier B—— was at the time

on leave in England, and, having been himself second in command under General Beatson, he, on hearing of General Smith's temporary absence, applied for orders, and was sent out to take the command. At the same time Brigadier H—— was gazetted Colonel, the two others being merely Lieutenant-Colonels. In consequence of these three events there were three officers commanding the Bashi-Bazouks, or Osmanli Irregular Cavalry, as we were now called, and no one of the three felt inclined to give up his claim to the other.

In the first place, there was General W——, who said, and truly, that he was second in command of the force, and that as the Chief was absent, the charge necessarily devolved upon him; besides which, as he added, the office had been specially vested in him by the Commandant, General Smith himself.

Secondly, there was Brigadier B——, who urged that he had been sent out direct from home, to command the Bashi-Bazouks, and that he must therefore decline yielding the right he held, more especially as it had been obtained from the fountain-head in London.

The third claimant, Brigadier H——, the senior officer in rank (inasmuch as by the Gazette mentioned he was made a Colonel, while the other two were but Lieutenant-Colonels), based on that fact his right to the post of Commandant, and urged with reason, that he could not be expected to serve under the command of officers who were his juniors.

All the three had, doubtless, reason on their sides;

and a reference home had to be made on the knotty point. General Shirley, who commanded the cavalry of the Turkish Contingent, and who was at that time at Shumla, having been sent there by General Vivian to inspect our troops, telegraphed direct to London, to ask which of the three claimants should command the force, and the answer was in favour of General W——, who was gazetted a Colonel at the same time.

Thus ended this little affair. I have mentioned it because it was a curious position of things, and not because I think any one claimant had the advantage over the other. They were doubtless all right, but as they could not *all* command, the anomaly of a force with three Commandants came to an end when the telegraphic answer was received from Lord Panmure.

I found Mr. S——, of whom I have so often spoken, was still with the corps at Shumla. General Vivian, on the occasion of the Bashi-Bazouks being attached to the Turkish Contingent, had appointed him Civil Commissioner to all the forces under his command, directing him, however, to remain with General Smith for the same purposes as he had originally been placed with General Beatson at the Dardanelles; since that time he had, I was told, interested himself much in the corps, and it appeared to me his relations with the Commandant-General Smith were all that could be desired.

Peace of course was now a known fact, and every one was on the *qui vive* to learn what was to become

of the Bashi-Bazouks. Probability, of course, pointed to an early disbandment; but shortly a rumour spread, arising no one knew where, to the effect that the force was to be maintained, with all its English officers, even *after* the complete execution on the part of the Russians of all the details set forth in the Treaty of Paris. This at first was not credited; but gradually the rumour became stronger, and convinced many that some foundation for the supposition existed.

I was no wiser than others at that time, but I have since then learnt the true state of the case, which was this:—It will be remembered, that, as I before stated, the Bashi-Bazouk force was in great favour with Lord Stratford de Redcliffe,—in short, that he regarded it as a parent does his child, its very existence having been owing entirely to him. When the peace came, he with political views, the exact nature of which I cannot pretend to fathom, thought it would be a great point for both England and Turkey if the corps were kept up, and he did all in his power to effect it.

What the exact terms were he proposed to our Government and the Ottoman Porte, I know not; but the plan certainly included the one great point of English officers in command, though I cannot say whether they were to have been paid out of the English or Turkish Treasury.

Our Ambassador, in short, interested himself very warmly in the matter, but the Sultan would in no way listen to the plan, and of course this necessitated its

failure. It was said at Constantinople that French and Austrian influences were much opposed to it, and that this actuated the Sultan in his refusal. I cannot say if this be true, but it is of course highly probable that the fact was so.

All the time this was going on, no one knew if or when we were to be disbanded, and this state of doubt did great harm. The men all believed in our early dissolution, and, in the natural course of things, were not as zealous in the discharge of their duties as formerly. The same effect was evident in a few cases with some of the officers; and hoping as I did that the result of the negotiations in progress would be the permanent establishment of the Osmanli Irregular Cavalry, or Bashi-Bazouks, I longed for the day that should bring them to a close, and that should announce to us our permanent existence as a military body.

With many the explanation of the delay that occurred was the fact of the Austrians being still in the Principalities; but I could fill a volume with the rumours, or "shaves," afloat, which even when you thought they were not true, could excite you, and keep you on the rack of expectation. One day it was said the telegraph order for our disbandment had been received by the General, and that the secret (the Government being very anxious no one should know it) had been sent in cipher, but that one of the clerks of the office who possessed the key had divulged it! The next day a new report said we were *certainly* to be kept up, for an arrange-

ment to that effect had been made with the Sultan, and two posts more would bring all the details! The third morning it was bruited about that the English Government, having spent so much money on the corps, had wisely determined to keep the whole force for its own use and benefit, and that our destination would be India; it was not known to a certainty whether Bengal, Madras, or Bombay was to receive us, but the balance of probabilities was in favour of Calcutta and its neighbourhood; and calculations were even entered into as to which officers would go, and which would resign rather than encounter an Indian climate!

Such were a few of the new stories that greeted us almost daily, till every one got sick of the subject; and the word disbandment, or the possible future career of the force, was not allowed to be broached in the decent and right-minded coteries at Shumla.

Of course when the order really *did* come, in the middle of June, no one expected it. However, there it was, and could not be gainsayed. In effect, it was simple enough: all the English officers who could be spared were to be discharged at once, and the remainder were to proceed with the different regiments to the countries where they had been raised, and on arrival there disband them.

Two hours after the intelligence was made public, it was known to all the Bashis at Shumla; and I was pleased to find, that, with few exceptions, they looked

upon it as bad news. These exceptions were men with a strong love for their fatherland, and who hailed the prospect of returning with the little fortune, which a service of some months' (added to the three months' gratuity) pay would enable them to realise; but to the mass the news was not welcome; they would rather have stopped with us, and were grieved to find their period of servitude would so shortly expire.

The General commanding entered into immediate arrangements for carrying out the orders he had received from home. A few days later upwards of forty officers left Shumla *en route* for Constantinople, where they were to be paid up and discharged. After this, there were still left three English officers, besides a surgeon with each regiment, so that it is evident there were many supernumeraries in the force, though all the forty could not be classed under that head, as a large proportion who had gone consisted of medical men and veterinary surgeons.

Orders soon appeared directing the regiments to march, on certain dates given, to their homes for disbandment. As I have said before, there were eight regiments in all, but one of them had never joined head-quarters at all, was raised (I think) at Beyrout, and was disbanded at the same place. Of the remaining seven, three returned to Western Turkey, to the towns of Monastir, Peerleppi, and Uscup respectively, one to Widdin on the Danube, and the remaining

three to Asiatic Turkey, *viz.* two of them to Syria, and the third to Anatolia.

The regiments for Asia Minor having proceeded to Varna were thence shipped off in large transports to their destinations, while the Arnaout regiments marched to their respective homes; but as three of them were bound to Western Turkey, and consequently obliged to traverse the same route, they were sent off with intervals of two days from each other.

The monetary arrangements made by the British Government regarding both the English officers and the native troops, were most liberal—perhaps unnecessarily so in the latter case, if one may judge from the astonishment of the men when they received their parting payment; but the day *may* come when it will prove to have been money well spent. The amounts allowed were as follows:

Every English officer was to receive a gratuity of two months' full pay and allowances, 30*l.* for each charger, 25*l.* for a passage home, besides 16*l.* for the passage of an English servant, if he had one.

The 30*l.* allowed for each charger was supposed to cover the loss which would be sustained by their sale. But, as a general rule, so absurdly cheap were horses at the end of the war, that I believe the English officers lost large sums by their stables.

The native officers and men were to receive a gratuity of three months' pay on disbandment, their

regular pay, rations, and forage being given them up to the time the regiments reached their destinations. I have said before, that I think this was unnecessary liberality; anyhow the native officers and men were certainly astonished at its magnitude.

I, as Second in command of a regiment, was detained to accompany it home; for this duty the Commandant, Second in command, and Adjutant of each corps were told off. My Commandant was a gentleman-like, agreeable, and gallant officer. Our destination was Uscup, in Western Turkey, and I anticipated much pleasure in his society during the march there.

Mahomet—the good, the brave, the faithful Mahomet—was to return to Damascus with his regiment, and I was to see him no more. I had become more attached to this man than I can readily describe in words, and I believe he felt in the same manner towards me. I thought at one time of bringing him to England, but as he could not be always fighting here, I knew he would be miserable; besides, to what possible use could I put him in this peaceable country? The reader knows he hated work,—what then could he do? "Nothing" was the only answer I could give, and I determined to part with him.

I gave him a little money and my revolver pistol, the one which I had lent him and he had always used. For the first gift he said nothing, but he cried when I gave him the second—cried for very joy.

"Is it really now mine?" he asked as he stroked

the smooth bluish-coloured barrel, and gently cocked the hammer.

"Yes," I said, "and I would it were a present more worthy of all your faithful servitude."

"I shall never separate from it, Sahib; it shall be with me when I die. You have been a good master to me," and he affectionately pressed my hand between both his as he spoke.

"We shall part the day after to-morrow, Mahomet," I added, "and I wish to give you a certificate testifying to your worth, here it is," and I handed to him a paper I had written out on the subject.

He took it in silence, kissed my hand, and withdrew.

He returned an hour later, his face radiant with joy. He had got an officer in his regiment, Captain G——, who spoke Hindostanee, to translate the certificate for him, and he thus heard the high opinion I had of him and his remarkable courage.

"You are too good to me:—God bless you, Sahib—this certificate will certainly get me service elsewhere." After a pause he added, "Captain G—— tells me the regiment starts to-morrow morning, so I must take my leave of you to-night:—Salaam, Sahib," he said, putting his hand to his forehead, while his eyes filled with tears.

I held out my hand and took his. I did not speak, but I shook it heartily; and never in my life, except when parting for a long time with a very near and dear relation, did I feel more pain than when I turned from

poor Mahomet, well knowing that I should never see him again.

Four days before Mahomet left me, my poor horse "Night" had suddenly died. I felt very sad that evening, thinking that they were both gone—both friends who had done me good service in the hour of need, and one of them, Mahomet, possessed of virtues which, humble as he was, raised him in those respects to the level of—ay, and far above,—many a crowned head.

Some time before the force was broken up—I cannot specify the exact time—the commandant, General Smith, sent in to the Ottoman Porte the names of all such officers as he considered entitled to the rank which the Sultan sometimes grants for services in his dominions. I knew nothing of it at the time, but I was pleased, after my arrival in England, to find at the War-Office, a firman from His Majesty the Sultan of Turkey, granting me the rank of Kaimakam, or Lieutenant-Colonel, in the Turkish army.

It was, I think, the 28th of June, that we left Shumla. Besides the three officers enumerated, of which I was one, the Surgeon of the regiment also accompanied us. I often look back to the march we then performed with real pleasure; we were all in good health and spirits,—the excellence of the latter being not a little increased by the knowledge that, this our last duty completed, we should return once more to Old England; for though I had been the longest absentee of the party, the remainder were quite as

desirous as myself to see Albion's chalky cliffs once more.

The duties with the regiment were not heavy, for as we were simply taking the men home for disbandment, it was neither necessary nor politic to keep up any strict degree of discipline; and we thus had much more liberty than we could have had otherwise. I have a vivid recollection of the breakfasts indulged in by us, during some of those mornings' marches, when seated under the spreading branches of a wayside tree, the green grass for a table, the best of edibles for our repast, and that hunger which plenty of out-door exercise only produces, we enjoyed the good things our attendants had provided; and over the after-breakfast chibouques, discussed the scenes of the past, and as much of the future as we could severally foresee.

Our route for three hundred miles was the same as I had traversed two months before; and as incident there was none, and it is not allowed to invent them in a narrative like this, the reader must conceive the three weeks which were spent on the road already passed, and behold us comfortably housed at Uscup, where we remained one week disbanding the regiment.

This was a pleasant duty, inasmuch as the men were overjoyed at the sums of money they severally received.

The astonished look of each soldier, as the three months' gratuity, and other pay due, was put into his hand, in the shape of a handful of sovereigns, would have struck the most casual observer; it struck me

forcibly; and when, after paying his respects to the Commandant and myself, he jumped on his horse and galloped away, I could not help thinking how quickly he would re-appear, should those provinces ever again ring with a call to enlist under the British Flag.

The regiment all gone, we had nothing to do but go ourselves as fast as we wished—we made quick marches to Salonica, the town I passed through on my way to Monastir, and were glad of the two or three days' rest we got there while waiting for the steamer to Constantinople.

I concluded, at this point, my wanderings in Turkey by land—during the four journeys I had accomplished, *viz.*, from the Dardanelles to Monastir, Monastir to Shumla, Shumla to Uscup, and Uscup to Salonica, I had traversed 1700 miles, and I suppose I saw during that time as much of the interior of Turkey, *i. e.* those portions removed from European influence, as any Englishman, whether military or civil, whom business or pleasure took out to the East during the two years' war.

After three days at sea, and a week's detention at Constantinople, while the public accounts of the regiment were being closed, I paid my farewell visit to General Smith, who, with his staff, was at Therapia; and from that time was free to go where I would, for I was no longer in the service of our gracious Queen.

I stayed at Constantinople long enough to see the officers of several regiments return, and the remainder

came back shortly after my departure. I have inquired, and find that in every case the men went quietly to their homes, well contented and satisfied with the English Government; and I am happy to say, for it testifies much to the very ameliorated discipline they had attained, that I believe no irregularities or misconduct were attributed to any regiment on its journey home.

I speak with great confidence on this point, for, besides my own sources of information, I have seen a letter addressed by Lord Stratford to General Smith, in which he alludes to the excellent conduct displayed by the Irregular Cavalry on its way home, and congratulates the General on the very successful issue and termination of the force lately under his command.

As all my connection with the Bashi-Bazouks ceases here, my connection with the reader, in as far as any personal adventures are concerned, shall do the same; but as I would wish to consider, as shortly as may be, the political effect of the Force, and the future queries opened out thereby, I will entreat patience for one more very short chapter, more especially as, if not vouchsafed, the reader can close the book here, without fear of any evil results from the offended dignity of a Bashi-Bazouk!

CHAPTER XVII.

POLITICAL EFFECT—CONCLUSION.

In considering the political effect of the Bashi-Bazouk experiment, it will be necessary to show, shortly, the leading principles on which it was followed out; as, when this is done, the reader will at once perceive the cause of each result produced, and will also, I hope, agree with me in the deductions I draw therefrom.

There were two very salient points in the organisation and management of this Irregular Cavalry, which call for remark. They were, first, great liberality and punctuality in monetary affairs; and, secondly, an unwise leniency and slackness in military discipline.

These two causes, I consider, produced, firstly, an exaggerated idea of England's wealth, and a very high opinion of her justice and honesty; and secondly, a lowered estimate of her military character, as regards the capabilities of her sons for command.

Can it be wondered at, in the first place, if the prevalent ideas as to our wealth, in the districts where the Bashi-Bazouks were recruited, are absurd, and if

England is regarded as one large mine of gold? Let us see what cause we have given for the supposition.

An English officer appeared in a province—he invited men to join his flag—he promised them a rate of pay which their very wildest ideas of good luck had not equalled, as also food for themselves and horses; they could not believe in the truth of such temptations—the very magnificence of the offer made them doubt its reality, and they hung back. Some adventurous spirits, however, joined, thinking that if they got no pay they could secure plunder. Pay-day came; they were paid to the moment with bright golden guineas, fresh from the English Mint. They rubbed the sovereigns, and rung them to test their worth—rushed off to the Bazaar, and found, to their amazement, they had received the strange coin, if anything, under its value. All ranks were paid in the same way; their astonishment knew no bounds, nor did it decrease when they found the same thing repeated week after week, month after month, until the disbandment of the force.

"Oh, England doesn't care about money—she's got so much!" is an expression I have heard them use a thousand times, and I'm sure they believed it. But when, to crown all, at the final disbandment, they were tendered (what, indeed, they had been told when enlisted they were to have, but which they did not credit) three months' pay, as a present, or farewell gift, they were simply amazed at the prodigality of the English Government, and wondered why, with such means at

her disposal, she did not subsidise troops in every country, and govern the world!

I will now say a few words on the leniency of military discipline, which, with all deference to the opinion of others, has not, I consider, advanced our military reputation in Turkey, or rather, I should say, in the districts whence came the Bashi-Bazouks.

That such leniency, even to the point of weakness, *did* exist during the first few months after the embodiment of the force commenced, I shall not essay to prove; for unless the reader believes the fact already, it were time lost; and though the errors committed at first were in a great measure retrieved afterwards; though the opinions the men carried to their homes on disbandment differed much from the ideas they would have entertained had they left us in October, 1855, instead of July, 1856,—still the original effect produced was too vast in its extent, too lasting in its impression, to allow the ameliorated conduct of a few months to rectify it *in toto;* and the consequence is, as I have stated above, that we have not advanced our military reputation in Turkey by the enrolment of the Bashi-Bazouks.

Let us draw such good as we can from the experience gained in connection with this force, and now ascertain the important point,—how far in another war it would be wise again to levy these troops.

This query (the facility of further recruitment having been already stated and proved) resolves itself into the

simple question of how far they are worth it, *i. e.* may be made good soldiers of; and on this point I will venture to affirm there is but one opinion amongst the officers who lately commanded them, which is, that if judiciously treated, they would constitute a very valuable body of troops, inasmuch as they would be tractable and brave, while their peculiar powers of endurance for hard work, and the small amount of necessaries or baggage they require, constitute an excellence for light skirmishing cavalry, in which they certainly cannot be surpassed.

No one who has accompanied me through this book, can think I have written it with a view to prove the Bashi-Bazouks have been much maligned, or that my object has been to paint them in brighter colours than they deserve. On the contrary, I have exposed all their short-comings, dilated fully on all their misdeeds, and, as by doing so, I have concealed nothing which could enlighten the public as to the true character of these men, I consider my opinion will carry some weight with it, when I state that the Bashi-Bazouks at the time of their disbandment were fast being made good soldiers of, and that they have in them the material to form a highly efficient and valuable corps.

In conclusion I would observe, that when I commenced this little work, my intention was to avoid personalities, and merely give a rough sketch of the life I had led with these wild tribes. I soon found, however, that if I adhered to this plan, the information

I gave would be valueless, the scenes I drew *must* lack truthfulness, and it was therefore abandoned.

I trust, however, that in no case have personal attributes been discussed which do not bear on a public question; and that this principle will account for the omission of many names among the officers to which I could with facility and truth have rendered a high meed of praise.

If from the remarks I have felt myself called upon to make in the foregoing pages pain has been caused to any one, I can sincerely say, I regret the result, though I cannot abandon the principle I hold,—that the main source of England's greatness arises from the exposure of the evils in her administration, and that even at the cost of pain, whether to many or few, 'tis always well to tell the truth.

THE END.

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